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Michael Harrington

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Proposition 13: Screwing the Poor
Harold Meyerson

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AMONG OUR CONTRIBUTORS

LIONEL ABEL teaches in the English Department of the State University of New York at Buffalo. He is the author of *Metatheater* and of *Absalom*, a play that won the 1956 Obi Award.

RONALD ARONSON teaches history of ideas in a degree program for working adults at Wayne State University and is an active member of the New American Movement. His book on Jean-Paul Sartre will be published early next year by Schocken.

KENNETH J. ARROW, who teaches economics at Harvard University, won the Alfred Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Science, 1972. Among his books are *Social Choice and Individual Values* and *General Competitive Analysis*.

PAUL BLUMBERG, author of *Industrial Democracy: The Sociology of Participation*, is finishing a book on "The Predatory Society"—deception in business in New York City. He teaches sociology at Queens College, CUNY.

NOAM CHOMSKY teaches in the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy at MIT. He has written widely on contemporary political affairs and social issues.

SANFORD GOTTLIEB, who has worked for SANE from 1960 to 1977 and has written and spoken extensively on the arms race and arms reduction, is now Arms Reduction Coordinator for New Directions, a Washington-based citizens' lobby on international issues.

RICHARD HAMILTON AND JAMES WRIGHT, both sociologists, are the co-authors of *The American Working Class: Intellectual Illusions and Social Realities*, on which their recent *Dissent* article was based. Richard Hamilton teaches at McGill University, James Wright at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

HAROLD MEYERSON, a member of the DSOC National Board, is a Los Angeles-based freelance writer.

HANS J. MORGENTHAU teaches political science on the Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research. Among his books are *The Purpose of American Politics* and *A New Foreign Policy for the United States*.

AL NASH, member of the faculties of Cornell University and the Labor College and author of *The Union Steward: Duties, Rights, and Status*, is writing a book about his experiences as a socialist in the labor movement.

ALBERTO RONCHEY, who lives in Rome, is one of Italy's leading journalists. Two of his many books are available in English, *Russia in the Thaw* and *The Two Giants: An Analysis of Sino-Soviet Relations*.

SHEILA M. ROTHMAN is a senior research associate at the Center for Policy Research and co-director of the Project on Community Alternatives for the Mentally Disabled in New York City. She is co-editor, with David Rothman, of *Sources of the American Tradition* and *On Their Own: The Poor in Modern America*.

LEON SHULL is the national director of the Americans for Democratic Action in Washington, D.C. □

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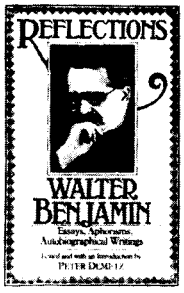

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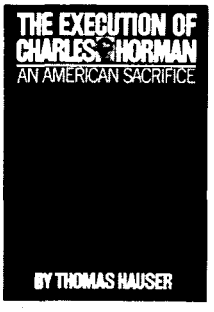

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For Harold Rosenberg

I was reading *Antigone* when I was told of Harold Rosenberg's death, and the sadness of the event has merged in my mind with some of the sadness of the play.

I keep thinking of a remark made by Antigone that is not only sad but strange. She has buried her brother in defiance of Creon, and when he asks her (more or less in these words): "Why are you so interested in the dead?" Antigone replies, "We spend more time with them than with the living." But do we?

There is no puzzle here if one takes her meaning to be that our time does not run out when we die, that our lives continue after death. Perhaps that is what she means. My difficulty here is that I do not believe life continues after death, and I want to support and identify myself with what Antigone says. In a way I can, and without concurring in the notion of continued life. For after a certain age (mine, for instance) one can hardly spend as much time with many persons now living as one has already spent with persons who are now dead. So one can after all naturalize Antigone's remark, if not for her, in view of her youth, then for oneself, if one is well past one's youth. In a quite real sense I can say that I have spent many more hours with persons now dead and buried than I shall have spent in the end with more than a very few persons now still living.

Such thoughts take one onto an unusual plane of thought, one of fundamental and continuing twilight, where sharp distinctions between the dead and the living seem blurred, as in Yeats's poems about ghosts and mummies, and in this beautiful line from one of his poems about his friends and acquaintances:

> All, all are in my mind tonight, being dead.

With some of the dead, it is not just the number of hours one has spent with them, but the quality of that time that counts. I knew Harold Rosenberg for almost fifty years, for the greater part of his life and the greater part of my own. But if there is some quality in the sheer quantity of time, there is also a quality in time about which its quantity is silent. There was an excitement in the period when I knew Harold well enough to see him regularly, once or twice a week during those weeks when it was not every day of the week. There was an excitement then about living and doing and proposing to do. There was an uncertainty in both hopes and fears, a carelessness about facts, and a heady sense that the future was there to be stormed any time one chose to do so. These feelings are gone, and gone forever.

But Harold Rosenberg is not the only person who has been taken from our lives, having been related to them in essential ways. If I make the roll call of former friends and acquaintances, I shall have to respond for many others who cannot now say, "Present." Benjamin Nelson died just this spring, soon after the death of Robert Lowell, and two years ago, Lionel Trilling. And before these deaths there were those of Jean Wahl, Barnett Newman, Nicola Chiaromonte, Lucien Goldman, Philip Rahv, Gandy Brodie, George Lichtheim, Paul Goodman, and Mark Rothko, just to mention a few on a list that grows longer every year.

When one makes this roll call, one suddenly realizes that despite the many differences between them, these persons had something important in common. They occupied a common terrain, which in some sense had to be held, and each defended that terrain in his own manner. Some with slingshots and some with cannon, some with the fine words, and others with the unprintable, but all were for occupying and continuing to occupy what I must believe to be the very terrain I find myself on, and shall have to try and defend by my own means, and with help from very few others, for there are only a few left who still want to defend it.

It may be said of the ones I have mentioned that they disliked some of the others. Perhaps. They were an articulate group, and whatever it was they felt, they were able to express. As for myself, I liked

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them all, every single one of them. I should like to stand on the same spot each occupied. It is as if we had all stood on the top of a fortress surrounded by enemy troops, each one of us with a gun to be fired. If the guns were still there, now that the marksmen are dead, I would be glad to pull the triggers for them. But in the kind of warfare I am speaking of, the weapon is of course indistinguishable from the one who uses it. Their weapons were what they themselves were, as my weapon is what I am, and also that I am still here.

But were I able to defend what Harold, for his part, defended, how shall I describe what it was? Just what did he defend, finally, that I can find an impulse in myself to fight for, now that he cannot?

In an eloquent and just tribute to Harold in the *New York Times,* Hilton Kramer noted Harold's dismissal of formalism in contemporary painting, also indicating that those contemporary painters Harold favored were in many ways formalists. But what saved them, for Harold, from the charge of formalism, Kramer indicates, was the radicalism of their art. So fundamentally, what Harold was defending was radicalism. And he defended it in whatever sphere he could find it. If he had a preference for radicalism in politics, yet he would take it where he found it, and he found it in the American painting of the fifties. So whatever he thought of formalism as an aesthetic doctrine, Harold was in a very real sense a formalist himself, a formalist of radicalism. Now is there a contradiction here?

It has been said that when force is lacking we are impelled to think of form, and I think this statement is correct. No one would want to concentrate on the *forms* of radicalism if the energy for achieving radical results were at hand. And if they are not at hand (they are not at the present time, nor were they during the last two decades) yet surely it is something to have kept alive the thought that whatever is not radical is simply not defendable, even if there are energies supporting it, and also something to have sustained this further thought: What has once been intellectually destroyed cannot ever be refurbished, even if the effort to replace it with something better still lacks the needed vigor . . .

I think, though, that it is wrong to regard radicalism in art as a kind of substitute for radicalism in politics, when political radicalism seems not favored by conditions or the time. One is not in any sense a proper substitute for the other. Didn't Eliot observe a long time ago that poetry is no possible substitute for religion as Arnold had thought it might be? Eliot went even further, arguing that if poetry were treated as a substitute for religion, it would be poor as religion and bad as poetry. In some sense, the same relation seems to hold between radicalism in art and radicalism in politics. The one cannot be the ground or justification of the other. Both need to be justified by something still more fundamental.

That which is prior to, more fundamental than radicalism in art, radicalism in action, is the homelessness of spirit that gave rise to both. It was this spirit which, according to George Lukacs, presided over the origins of the European novel, and he qualified this spirit as "transcendental," meaning by this that only by recognizing our homelessness can we provide a "home" in our minds for other forms of knowledge, for our other cognitions and recognitions. This spirit Harold thought vindicated by the artists he called "action painters," also by the political revolutions of this century, which he applauded. And he was committed to the vindication of this spirit in his own writings. Now there is an idea here I can indeed defend. Let me here repeat once more what Harold addressed himself to making clear, that no alternative to, or ideological therapy for, our condition of homelessness has yet been found, and until something of that order is discovered, our only valid works of art, our only valid actions must continue to express a certain distance from things, from others, and even from ourselves.

One last shot for a great defender.

LIONEL ABEL □

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FALL 1978

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Harold Meyerson

Proposition 13: Screwing the Poor

August 29

The main casualty of Proposition 13 within California—and perhaps without—is the dominant politics of the last 40 years. Welfare-state liberalism has almost vanished from the state's political spectrum. The welfare state itself still limps along, more feebly than before, but without benefit of audible defense. In this state of sects and movements, it doesn't even rate a cult.

Consider as a case in point the Democratic turnabout on the state spending limitation. This idea was first introduced in 1973, when then-Governor Reagan proposed that state expenditures be held to a fixed percentage of citizens' personal income. With some effort, one can remember how mainstream Democrats opposed the limitation, how they viewed with alarm its potential effect on government services, and how it met resounding defeat at the polls.

On June 23rd of this year, two weeks after the passage of Jarvis-Gann, Jerry Brown took to the airwaves to offer a spending limitation that was in essence identical to the Reagan panacea. The Republican State Senator who had revived the idea the week before Brown's speech responded by announcing he was "willing to welcome Governor Brown into the ranks of the Republican party." The Democratic leadership in the Legislature, far from resisting Brown, is busily adding the specifics to his suggestion. (Neither Brown nor Reagan is much inclined to specifics.) It is almost enough to make one nostalgic for 1973.

This is not, alas, a case of California exceptionalism. Half a year before Brown was offered his Republican papers, Jimmy Carter's State of the Union address so loudly trumpeted the limits of government's capacities that Barry Goldwater was moved to claim spiritual authorship. Even Ted Kennedy, when last heard from, was shunning the liberal label.

We have reached a watershed: a generation of Democratic refusal to challenge corporate priorities has made it almost impossible for the Democrats to continue to adhere to the welfare-state liberalism of the past four decades. Between an attack on corporate power and an assault on the poor, there is less and less room to maneuver. In California, as a result of Jarvis, there is specifically $7 billion less with which to favor the powerful and pacify the poor. And if the Democratic response to Jarvis has consisted preponderantly of an assault upon the powerless, it has also included an incipient campaign to politicize previously sacrosanct areas of the market.

The Democratic drive against the welfare state was formally inaugurated on the night of 13's passage with Jerry Brown's announcement that he would support no new taxes. Since that evening, city and county governments have had no alternative to cutting their services; among their prime targets thus far have been libraries and schools. (The city of Burbank, for instance, closed its branch libraries and cut its library budget by 45 percent.) The cuts worked out by the Governor and the heavily Democratic Legislature have been aimed more directly at the disadvantaged. The aged, blind, and disabled were granted a 3.7 percent annual cost-of-living increase, which is well under half of the annual inflation rate. Families receiving Aid to Dependent Children received no increase at all. Public employees had their contracts nullified; they received no increase at all. The money being denied these groups was at the same time being parceled out, via Jarvis, to the federal government (which gains from the diminished property tax deductions that will be taken on income taxes); to homeowners (who received slightly over $1 billion in indisputably necessary relief); and to landlords and businesses (who received a windfall totaling $4.3 billion). *First and foremost, Proposition 13 is a substantial upward redistribution of wealth.* The

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distinctive feature of the emerging era of limits is that public servants and the disadvantaged are the only ones limited.

But Proposition 13 has had a side effect not counted upon by its initiators and apologists: it has put the trickle-down process (or, more accurately, its bottlenecks) under unprecedented public scrutiny. There is nothing like rebating $1.2 billion in tax revenues to landlords, and then having those landlords hike the rent anyway, to induce a crisis of faith in the equitability of the market economy. Jarvis himself confesses great disappointment in the small number of apartment-house owners who have passed on their refunds to renters and at the much larger number who have impolitically raised their rents. Every afternoon, the Los Angeles Hearst newspaper runs on its front page a "Roll of Honor" of landlords who have elected not to raise the rent: apparently, any account of trickle-down's actually working constitutes genuine, man-bites-dog news.

The unresponsiveness of the market has led to an unprecedented campaign to subject it to public control. One month before 13 passed, the Los Angeles City Council summarily rejected a proposal for rent control; as I write, that Council and others around the state seem likely to mandate a rent rollback and freeze. The Legislature may follow suit. Conservative opponents of governmental intervention in the rent market can only offer themselves as a substitute state: Jarvis and the various apartment owners' associations are imploring landlords to forestall these controls by adhering to their program, which is identical to the ones the city councils are considering.

As with rents, so too with employment. Immediately after Jarvis-Gann passed, when it seemed that layoffs would total in the hundreds of thousands (they still may: if the courts invalidate the Legislature's abrogation of public-employee union contracts, then cost-of-living raises will be reinstated and the layoffs begun in earnest), Brown, Reagan, and Jarvis all alerted business to its "moral obligation" to create jobs. Like rent freezes, corporate hiring was headline news, even though the hiring had nothing to do with property tax savings. This is not to say that California harbors a significant movement to enforce public priorities upon corporations. Nonetheless, one result of 13 is that what capital does with its money is suddenly everybody's business. The ghost of Alfred Marshall must be mightily displeased.

So is California business. Attempts to interest the corporations in lowering prices or creating jobs with some of the $2.9 billion they are receiving in rebates have met with considerable resistance. Disneyland's President Donn B. Tatum explained why rides weren't going to get any cheaper, despite Disneyland's $1-to-2-million annual tax savings, with the useful admonition, "A million dollars doesn't buy you much these days." In a like fashion, the corporations' moral obligation to hire was placed in perspective by Harold E. Berg, president of Getty Oil and a frightening amalgam of Calvin Coolidge and Gertrude Stein: "Offhand, the business of business is business. We have a moral obligation to our stockholders."

IT IS PRECISELY the business of business, and the state's obeisance to it, that led to the Jarvis crunch in the first place. The immediate pressure for Jarvis was generated by a tremendous rise in housing prices in Los Angeles County, and a concomitant rise in property taxes out of all proportion to personal income: tax increases of more than 100 percent in a three-year period were commonplace in all but declining neighborhoods. While the rise in prices was fueled by rampant speculation, its basic cause was a housing shortage that has seen the apartment vacancy rate fall to 2 percent. The shortage, in turn, resulted from two business-oriented political decisions—that of the federal banking agencies to tighten the money supply, and that of state and local governments to build no public housing—and from a series of decisions by voters and their representatives to limit growth.

But why was the reliance on the property tax so great? Precisely because in California, as in other states, the tax structure was designed to favor corporations. In 1976, the property tax accounted for $7.3 billion in revenue to the state of California and its municipalities; added to the sales and gas taxes, these levies brought in over $13½ billion. The progressive taxes—bank, corporation, personal income, inheritance—accounted for a total of $4.6 billion, one-third the amount brought in by the regressive taxes. Indeed, until 1976, it took a two-thirds vote of the Legislature to raise bank and corporation taxes, where a simple majority sufficed for all others. Not that bank and corporation taxes have since been raised. In recent years, the Legislature has had before it a number of proposed tax reforms that could have obviated the need for Jarvis and kept the welfare state intact—could even have expanded it—but these were invariably derailed in deference to the corporate rich. With the comment, "I don't see any point in gratuitously taking revenue from any particular class when there's no need for it," Jerry Brown opposed a 1977 tax reform bill that would have rebated property

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taxes and rents in accordance with income, and made up the difference with higher taxes on banks, corporations, and capital gains. Even last spring, when the Jarvis threat had to be taken seriously, the Legislature's tepid alternative to Jarvis was weakened still further when its provisions for a real estate speculation tax were excised in deference to the realtors' lobby.

This is not a case of California exceptionalism either. The postwar growth of state and local government services, of the defense economy and of Social Security spending, has not come at the expense of the corporate sector. On the contrary, although the corporate sector grew from accounting for 54.9 percent of the GNP in 1948 to 60.7 percent in 1974, the percentage of federal, state, and local taxes it paid shrank from 31 percent in 1952 to 14 percent in 1975. No welfare state, be it ever so begrudging, can long survive this kind of diminishing support.

THERE IS ONE additional factor that should be adduced in this autopsy, though it is as much an effect as a cause, and that is the declining size of the electorate. Despite the phenomenal interest Jarvis provoked, only a little over 40 percent of voting-age Californians went to the polls on election day. In fact, the number of registered voters in the state peaked in 1972, when it stood at 10½ million. Through the 1974, 1976, and 1978 elections, it hovered just below the 10 million mark despite an increase of 2 million persons in California's voting-age population during this time. The voting booth is increasingly a place for the middle-aged and older, the middle class and richer.

This creates a vicious cycle. As the electorate shrinks and becomes more conservative, Democratic party politicians respond by adopting more conservative policies. And as policy differences between Democrat and Republican wane, as the Democrats offer less and less that will make a positive difference in the lives of the poor and the young, these groups stay away from the polls, and the cycle begins anew. This rightward drift can be broken, and the crisis of welfare-state liberalism humanely resolved, only by campaigns that counterpose democratic solutions to the failure of corporations to supply jobs or landlords to offer reasonable rents.

Even as their current policies converge, however, the parties still maintain their distinct constituencies, and therein lies one source of their abiding difference in the age of lowered expectations: the Republicans screw the Democratic poor; the Democrats screw their own. □

Joan Blue

The Resignation of Douglas Fraser

This past July Douglas Fraser, president of the United Automobile Workers Union, announced that he was pulling out of the high-level Labor-Management Group of union and business leaders presided over by former Secretary of Labor John Dunlop, because in Fraser's view American capitalism had declared open war on the trade unions.

The Labor-Management Group was established by John Dunlop when he served as secretary of labor under Gerald Ford. When Dunlop resigned in protest over Ford's veto of the Situs Picketing Bill, he reestablished the Group outside of government as a high-level forum for seeking cooperative approaches to national economic problems.

What appears to have accounted for Fraser's disengagement from the "Group" is the massive effort by management to block, through a Senate filibuster, labor's proposals for reforming the labor laws enacted by Congress.

The labor-law package consisted of a number of relatively modest improvements in the procedures governing union organizing. The labor movement had engaged in an unprecedented campaign for the bill's passage, in which it had enlisted the broadest political coalition assembled in years for any piece of social legislation.

On the other side, an alliance was forged between the old and the new right, supported by the most powerful corporate interests in America. The Senate filibuster commenced on May 16 and concluded on June 20, when the 60 senatorial votes required for cloture were not achieved on a sixth attempt. The bill was sent back to the Senate Human Resources Committee for watering-down and subsequent Senate reconsideration.

On May 24, prior to the final filibuster vote, labor's frustration with management's massive resistance to its moderate proposals was voiced by AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Lane Kirkland at a symposium on "Work in America" held at Arden House. Kirkland observed that the filibuster had been "organized, promoted and sustained, not by some primitive sections of industry, but by all of corporate America . . . and by the most privileged and powerful in the society."

Kirkland then threw down the threat of a labor withdrawal from existing national cooperative

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labor-management efforts and committees in the event labor-law reform failed. Before Kirkland could make good his threat, Doug Fraser resigned from the Labor Management Group. Fraser declared:

> I have concluded there is no point to continue sitting down at Labor-Management Group meetings and philosophizing about the future of the country and the world when we on the labor side have so little in common with those across the table. . . .
>
> I would rather sit with the rural poor, the desperate children of urban blight, the victims of racism, and working people seeking a better life than with those whose religion is the status quo, whose goal is profit and whose hearts are cold. We in the UAW intend to reforge the links with those who believe in struggle: the kind of people who sat-down in the factories in the 1930's and who marched in Selma in the 1960's.

What reaction the rest of the labor movement will have to the Fraser resignation is also open. But that the first-round defeat on labor-law reform has had an eye-opening impact upon the labor movement cannot be doubted. Indeed, the alternatives open to the labor movement appear to be a clear turn toward militancy and resistance to corporate power in the face of a substantial right-wing mobilization or a capitulation to a status quo in which labor's role and influence will be diminished substantially in the years to come. □

Leon Shull

Worst Congress in History?

There are people in Washington who say that the present Congress is the worst in memory. "Worst" is a big word, of course, like "forever" and "never," and there may be little profit, except for the historian, in the analysis of past Congresses to see if one might be found where the members did so little and where their principal—perhaps sole—concern was their own reelection.

Members of Congress are concerned about possible loss of votes at home; it is a legitimate concern. But historically, persons of principle have seldom accepted voter reprisal as an excuse for casting a bad vote. An analysis of congressional votes, especially in the House, shows that both the first- and second-term members of the 95th Congress are different. They are different because —

- They come with more political experience in their home states than has been customary in the past, which means that they are accustomed to making political (vested-interest) decisions;
- They believe they "owe nothing to anybody," meaning that they owe nothing to the President;
- They are primarily concerned with the issues that they perceive to be critical to their reelection;
- And they see personal service to their constituents as more important than the consideration of legislation.

All these factors, together with what can be fairly described as a lack of political leadership in the White House, the House, and particularly the Senate, make the prognosis for any kind of legislation more than normally uncertain.

Both sides of the aisle display this lack of leadership. The conservatives—the Phil Cranes, the McDonalds, the Hatches, and Smiths—get a lot of publicity but are no more effective in holding their following than are the liberals. Tip O'Neill has been more effective than Bob Byrd, but this is faint praise. On a fair number of important economic votes during 1978, O'Neill has been able to win only after some of the fanciest arm-twisting on record. As for the Senate, its only achievement after seven months is the Panama Canal Treaty.

What is frightening the members is clear enough. They believe that voters are obsessed by fear of "big government" and by their own inflation-related economic problems.

IT SHOULD BE CLEAR that this turning away from liberal proposals reflects a conscious and calculated decision about how to get reelected, not a real change in the ideology of the members. It betrays, of course, an absence of political courage. For example:

- The Holt amendment to the First Budget Resolution for FY79, which would have cut over $21 billion in budget authority and $13 billion in budget outlays, was defeated by only five votes, even though these cuts would have wrecked an entire system of social programs.
- The Vanik amendment on elementary- and secondary-school tuition tax credits gives far more money to upper-middle-class and affluent families

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for school-tuition payments than is now spent, through elementary- and secondary-school appropriations, on the underprivileged.

- The meat-axe Michel amendment, aiming at "fraud, waste and abuse," reduces the FY79 Labor/HEW appropriations by $1 billion, and passed by a 290-87 vote.
- A series of abortion votes effectively deny abortion funds to the poor, while for the affluent, under the Supreme Court ruling, abortions remain available.

The Walker amendment, which would prohibit the use of Labor/HEW funds to implement goals or other numerical requirements relating to race, creed, or sex in higher-education hiring, promotion, or admissions policies, was adopted 232-177, and must be seen as a major blow to civil rights.

- Seven Miller amendments to appropriations bills have cut 2 percent from the FY79 appropriations bills for social services.
- The Kemp amendment to Humphrey-Hawkins, which would have mandated a permanent tax cut—at a cost of $500 billion—by 1983, was defeated 216-194, a margin of only 22 votes.
- The tax-reform debacle in the House Ways and Means Committee represents a complete cave-in to special interests. Six months ago no one would have believed that the Steiger amendment, which the President characterized as a give-away to the rich, had any chance of passage.
- It is widely held on the Hill that the CETA reauthorization action in both House and Senate will have to include a sub-minimum wage for youth and a Walker-type anti-affirmative-action amendment.

The Senate managed to pass the Panama Canal Treaty, and then could not muster 60 votes to end cloture for modest labor-law reform legislation. Humphrey-Hawkins was amended by the Senate Banking Committee to add as a target a zero inflation rate by 1983, and a commitment to spend through the federal budget no more than 20 percent of the GNP by 1983. The first of these amendments, the inflation amendment, is a prime example of irresponsibility; the amendment cannot be enforced. And the proposal to hold the budget to 20 percent of the GNP would sound the death knell for all new federal programs, including, of course, national health insurance. Add to these items the impending sell-out to the oil interests in the natural gas deregulation bill, which by 1985 will result in a $250-billion windfall profit to the oil interests.

It must be said, too, that this "worst Congress" is in part the product of the steady trend that has produced today's weakened Democratic and Republican parties. Candidates now run for office as independents. Each candidate, incumbent or not, establishes a personal campaign committee. And party organizations have correspondingly declined in their ability to influence events. The establishment of policy and raising of funds by the candidate, the development of campaign and political strategy for the candidate, all take place outside the political party. And the candidate is therefore not much concerned with the platform of the party to which he or she professes allegiance.

In other days it was always the conservatives who wanted Congress to go home as soon as possible and to do as little as possible. This was because the conservatives do not much believe in government. Now it is the liberals who are saying, for different reasons, that Congress ought to go home and the sooner the better. And they might as well go. There's little reason to believe that this Congress can do anything except damage. □

Sanford Gottlieb

SALT Treaty — What's at Stake

Public-opinion polls indicate that Americans overwhelmingly distrust the Soviet Union—and favor nuclear-arms agreements with the U.S.S.R. This split vision happens to reflect a healthy dose of reality. On the one hand, Soviet leaders have done little to reassure the West in recent years. Soviet adventurism in Africa, military buildups, and the repression of dissidents at home have combined with three decades of cold-war competition and conditioning to make us highly suspicious of their motives.

On the other hand, most Americans know that

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nuclear war isn't good for humans and other living things. The public believes that, "in a nuclear era, confrontations between the two leading nations in the world must be avoided," according to pollster Louis Harris. "This means finding areas of agreement which might then ease tensions."

Since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki ushered in the nuclear era, the Soviet-American arms race has produced two arsenals of mass destruction so awesome as to defy human imagination. Among its stockpile of 25,000 nuclear weapons of all sizes, the United States deploys 9,000 strategic warheads that can reach the Soviet Union on long-range missiles and bombers and submarine-launched missiles, within half an hour. *The smallest of these strategic warheads is three times as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb!* With a smaller arsenal, the Soviet Union has 4,500 strategic nuclear warheads mounted on its own triad of delivery vehicles.

Each superpower could inflict over 100 million deaths on the other in the first day of nuclear war, through the heat, blast, and immediate radiation from these weapons. Millions more would die from the longer-term effects of radiation, lack of sanitary and health services, and a phenomenon first reported by the National Academy of Sciences in 1975: depletion of the ozone layer that shields us from the sun's radiation.

The survivors would no doubt envy the dead.

It is not simply the huge numbers of weapons of mass annihilation that cause the dangers of the nuclear era. Both superpowers are preparing to deliver these weapons more accurately; moreover, the superpowers are no longer the only players on the nuclear scene.

While less accurate missiles may be militarily useful as a deterrent, more accurate missiles are primarily useful to attack other missiles in their silos. Accuracy is a requirement of nuclear war-making. In the jargon of the arms-control experts, missile accuracy is "destabilizing" because it generates fears of a first strike. In plain English, it makes the leaders at the other end nervous about a nuclear Pearl Harbor.

This fear has caused Washington's anti-arms control forces to fasten on "Minuteman vulnerability" as a major reason for opposing the SALT II treaty that is still under negotiation. According to the fears articulated by such spokesmen as Paul Nitze, in the 1980s the Soviet Union will have enough nuclear warheads carried by accurate missiles to be able to destroy the U.S. Minuteman missiles in their silos.

However, to charge that the SALT II treaty is somehow responsible for this theoretical danger is to engage in psychological jiu-jitsu. The anti-SALT II treaty leaders of today are the ones who opposed negotiations in 1970 on the very technology, separately aimed multiple warheads carried by a single missile, that might permit the Soviets to threaten American ICBMs. In 1970, only the United States possessed this technology. The U.S.S.R. followed our lead, and now both nations are more insecure. This has been the repeated dynamic of the arms race, with the United States thrusting into a lead that the Soviet Union vigorously strives to overcome.

Nuclear war scenarios tend to push aside the common-sense judgments that are so necessary if public opinion is to provide a corrective to miscalculation in high places. In the real world, what possible gains would induce hard-headed Soviet leaders to attack our ICBMs and risk national suicide? The United States has 5,000 strategic nuclear warheads on its submarines—more than the Soviets possess in their entire arsenal. Could Soviet leaders assume the American president would fail to retaliate with these weapons? Or with the several thousand bombs carried by the 350 fully operational B-52 bombers? And, even assuming a wildly improbable refusal of the United States to retaliate, how would Mr. Brezhnev or his successor explain the irradiation of the Kansas wheat fields that have helped feed the Soviet people? Indeed, how explain the radioactive fallout carried to the Soviet heartland? If, however, Soviet leaders are irrational about their own survival, then there's no point in devising enormously costly and sophisticated deterrence systems.

The second major danger of the current nuclear era is the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries. There are five avowed nuclear-weapon states: the United States, the U.S.S.R., Great Britain, France, and China. A sixth, India, has set off a nuclear "device," thus proving that it has weapons capability. A seventh, Israel, is believed by the CIA to have an untested stockpile of atomic bombs. In 1977, Soviet-American collaboration helped persuade South Africa not to conduct its first nuclear test. (Tests are necessary to prove whether these weapons will work.)

Another 20 to 25 countries have the technical competence to manufacture their own nuclear weapons before the end of this century. Among them are Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, Iran, Libya, Pakistan, South Korea, and Taiwan. Many of the nations standing just outside the Nuclear Club are involved in rivalries with neighbors.

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In Article VI of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty that was negotiated in 1968 and went into effect in 1970, the superpowers pledged themselves to make progress toward nuclear disarmament. This was part of the bargain with the non-nuclear weapons states. The latter agreed not to acquire these weapons. If the superpowers fail much longer to deliver on their decade-old pledge, there is little reason to believe they will have any power to dissuade the have-nots from going it alone.

The more fingers on the nuclear button, the greater the chance of war. Specifically, the more fingers of hostile neighbors on the nuclear button, the greater the chance that nuclear war will begin in the Third World—perhaps between countries that have different big-power allies. Moreover, if a new generation of civilian nuclear reactors known as fast breeders comes into widespread use and produces large quantities of plutonium, terrorist groups as well as governments are likely to get their hands on nuclear weapons in coming years.

AGAINST THIS BACKDROP of proliferating A- and H-bombs and improvements in the missiles that carry them, what is contained in the SALT II treaty that will come before the U.S. Senate in 1979? Considering the scope of the problem, SALT II represents a very modest step. The agreement has three parts. The treaty, to last until 1985, will provide for equal ceilings on the numbers of strategic missiles and bombers, although not on the numbers of warheads they carry. Ceilings will also be placed on the total number of missiles and bombers that can carry multiple warheads and cruise missiles, with subceilings for the number of land-based missiles that can deliver multiple bombs. The parties to the agreement will exchange data on the restricted weapons and check compliance through their own spy satellites and other technology.

A protocol that will probably last through 1980 will place temporary limits on several major weapons systems that are still under development: cruise missiles and mobile ICBMs. The cruise missile, a tiny pilotless drone that carries a nuclear bomb with great accuracy to a target up to 2,000 miles away, can be launched from bombers, ships, and flat-bed trucks. SALT II will permit only bomber-launched cruise missiles at longer ranges. Because of their small size, sea-launched and ground-launched cruise missiles would be easy to hide and thus could foil any verification scheme that tried to locate and count them. When cruise missiles are mounted on specific kinds of bombers, the bombers are easily photographed by the other side's spy satellites. As for the mobile ICBM, it would be moved around in its various proposed modes of transport, either above or below ground. This mobility, which makes it attractive to those who worry about "Minuteman vulnerability," makes it a nightmare to arms controllers concerned with verifying treaties.

The third section of SALT II will be a Joint Statement of Principles and Guidelines for SALT III. This little-noticed element could become very important, for SALT III will be the first opportunity to negotiate significant reductions in the Soviet and U.S. arsenals. The SALT II ceilings—2,250 missiles and bombers on each side by 1985—would provide the superpowers with no less destructive power than they deploy today. While the 1985 ceiling would oblige the Soviets to dismantle 250 to 300 missiles and bombers, the United States could actually *build up to* that level. Moreover, both sides could increase the number of multiple warheads placed on the 2,250 "delivery vehicles," as these death-carrying instruments are so blandly called.

What then are the advantages of SALT II? And why do its detractors oppose it so vigorously?

The advantages lie largely in the restraints placed on Soviet strategic programs and, to a lesser extent, on the U.S. build-up. The treaty would also reduce the uncertainties each side would feel about the nature of the other's strategic forces during the 1980s. For the Soviet leadership, SALT II also offers the psychological satisfaction of equal strategic ceilings (parity) with the United States. In sum, the arms race would be much more dangerous without a SALT II treaty, and no official on either side knows how to reach negotiations for further reductions without first going through the door marked SALT II.

The well-financed, long-organized opposition to the agreement has not limited its attacks to the provisions of the treaty, most of which were classified secret until earlier this year. Underlying their arguments is a world view that sees Soviet power as the overriding threat to U.S. national security and perceives American power as waning and Soviet power as waxing. The opponents claim that the United States is militarily inferior, that SALT freezes this "inferiority," and that the Soviet Union should be made to pay a price in some other field (Africa or treatment of dissidents) for the right to conclude an arms-control treaty.

Defense Secretary Harold Brown has described both the superpowers as giants, with roughly

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comparable military power. According to Brown, the American giant is somewhat more agile. The Defense Secretary complained in June about "simplistic comparisons" ignoring "that a quarter of the Soviet non-nuclear capability is on the Chinese frontier; that current Soviet operating doctrines require larger forces than we would use for the same purposes; and that we have stronger, more reliable allies than the Soviets." Approximately half of the Warsaw Pact troops are Poles, Czechs, and East Germans.

In the strategic nuclear area, the American giant leads in the number of warheads, which determines how many targets can be hit, as well as in heavy bombers and in missiles that carry multiple warheads. The United States also has a technological lead in cruise missiles, warhead accuracy and guidance, computers, submarine detection, and survivability of missiles. The Soviet giant leads in the number of land-based and heavy missiles. The numbers of land-based missiles reflect the Russians' historic land-oriented military outlook; the heavy missiles represent an effort to catch up with the earlier U.S. technological lead by building nuclear blunderbusses.

To make a case for U.S. military "inferiority," the opponents of SALT, who tend to be opponents of *any* arms-control agreement with the Soviet Union, are obliged to stress only one end of a broad and complex spectrum of military strength while ignoring the rest. Or, as was the case with Eugene Rostow at a State Department-sponsored conference in Hartford in July, they are obliged to invent "facts." There is simply no realistic case to be made for U.S. inferiority, now or in the future. The American economic base is twice as large as that of the Soviets, and U.S. technological prowess is superior. Of this the Soviet leaders are painfully aware. Yet, in the absence of a negotiated alternative to the arms race, both governments are prepared to mortgage more of the future just to keep up with each other.

THE ATTEMPT TO LINK a SALT treaty with Soviet adventurism in Africa or Soviet repression at home speaks to the anxieties of many Americans about the behavior of the other superpower. But however much we may want to correct that behavior, SALT is not a good-conduct medal to be pinned on the Russians as a reward. It is a series of treaties negotiated to enhance our security, Soviet security, and world security. As such, it is built on areas of common interest: avoiding nuclear war, stemming the spread of nuclear weapons, someday reducing the terrible economic burdens of the arms race. These areas of common interest are so overarching that other important interests on which survival does not depend must be dealt with separately.

It is remarkable that, despite the KGB tactics so visibly in use in the Soviet Union, the American public appears to understand the complexity of living on the same planet as the Soviets. In a Gallup Poll conducted during the emotion of the Shcharansky trial, 64 percent said that SALT negotiations were too important to be broken off. Over half the respondents did not believe we could influence Soviet treatment of their citizens. This is a pretty sophisticated understanding of international priorities and of the limits of power. We *do* need a SALT treaty despite Soviet brutishness, and even the experts don't know how American actions can make the Soviet leaders less rigid and more cooperative across the board.

Unfortunately, the U.S. Senate, which must ratify treaties by a two-thirds vote, is not hearing from the public at large. It is hearing from the new right, which manages to produce mail on subjects as varied as Paul Warnke's nomination, Panama, ERA, abortion, and the Russians. In addition, the Senate has heard contradictory signals from the President, who in the early spring followed the urgings of his political advisers to talk "tough" to the Russians and thus restore his flagging popularity in the polls. National security adviser Brzezinski counseled the same approach for reasons of international politics. So, Carter talked tough, the Russians didn't melt, and his slide in the polls continued. Carter has since moved away from a cold-war stance, but the improvisations have not helped generate confidence in his handling of the Soviet Union.

The mood in the Senate is very anti-Soviet and moderately anti-Carter. The ratification of a SALT II treaty will depend largely on the tone of Soviet-American relations at the time, the degree of disaffection with Jimmy Carter, and the provisions of the treaty—perhaps in that order.

This picture could be modified by an effective Administration campaign for the treaty and by the mobilization of a vocal arms-reduction constituency. Until these factors materialize, the 67 votes for ratification are not in sight.

If SALT II is defeated, the arms race will be run without restraints. Both sides will produce new weapons systems, generate new fears of surprise attack, indirectly encourage an expansion of the Nuclear Club, and expend much more money, sweat, steel, and oil. The Senate Budget Committee

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estimates that, without SALT, the United States will spend about $100 billion more for strategic weapons over the next decade and a half. At any given moment, everyone will be less secure.

It is not only in Washington and Moscow, Dallas and Kiev that observers will be watching the progress of SALT II. Shortly before Carter's Annapolis speech, Hungarian politicians were reported by *Washington Post* correspondent Michael Dobbs to be "particularly uneasy about the uncertainty over SALT. It is believed here [Budapest] that if the Soviet Union were to feel its security in any way challenged, it would immediately seek to reimpose a monolithic orthodoxy on Eastern Europe."

It is hard to exaggerate the watershed quality of this modest treaty, for those who yearn for liberalization in Moscow's sphere of influence as well as those who just want to enjoy the basic human right of survival. □

David Bromwich

Solzhenitsyn and Freedom of the Press

A curious feature of Solzhenitsyn's Commencement Speech at Harvard (*National Review*, July 7, 1978) is its attack on freedom of the press. The untoward liberties that American journalists are known to take have been shocking to Solzhenitsyn, and he responds with something between petulance and indignation. He leaves his listeners uncertain whether he has really thought about, or understood, the interdependence of *liberties* and *liberty* as such. And in contrasting Soviet repression with American freedom, he exhibits what must strike his listeners as a weird nostalgia for one element in the Soviet system:

> By what law has [the American press] been elected and to whom is it responsible? In the Communist East, a journalist is frankly appointed as a state official. But who has granted Western journalists their power, for how long a time, and with what prerogatives?

In the East the press is censored but at any rate knows its place; in the West it is responsible to no one, and has become an ungovernable power.

"Legally," Solzhenitsyn adds, "your researches are free, but they are conditioned by the fashion of the day. There is no open violence such as in the East; however,"—in short, the violence we do to freedom is better concealed but equally pervasive, and Solzhenitsyn has come to tear away the veil. His iconoclasm, however, is less original than he supposes: a decade ago we heard exactly the same criticism of America from Herbert Marcuse—who even gave a name, Repressive Tolerance, to the manipulation of public opinion that Solzhenitsyn now loudly and audibly laments. Solzhenitsyn also shares Marcuse's unqualified revulsion from "publicity," "TV stupor," and "intolerable music": an "invasion" whose effects both men are led to exaggerate by their exceedingly abstract knowledge of the invader. In most respects, of course, Solzhenitsyn and Marcuse could hardly be more different from each other, yet they have in common a fairly obvious personal trait—a commanding need for isolation. Neither of them has seen much of America and both are astonishingly without curiosity about it. More than a century ago de Tocqueville, who was gifted with great curiosity, wrote with comparable suspicion about public opinion in America but came to a different conclusion about the importance of our freedoms. Let us affirm—with all deference to the moral, religious, and political cant that fills our lives—that this *sliding* analogy between the "open violence" of totalitarianism and the "however-violence" of republican democracy is the worst cant we know. *The difference between total repression and voluntary adherence to fashion is a difference in kind.*

IF WE HAD TO SAY why Solzhenitsyn finds himself among the critics of freedom of the press, we might point to a single intellectual limitation that runs through his life: he seems incapable of distinguishing strength of character from the strength of a principle. He believes that great souls are formed by the contest of courage with intense suffering. He clearly regards himself as such a soul, and he is. But when he tells us that "through intense suffering [Russia] has now achieved a spiritual development of such intensity that the Western system in its present state of spiritual exhaustion does not look attractive"—we reply that his work more than

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anything else has convinced us that this is not so, that in Russia the spirit itself is laid waste, for all but a few lucky survivors. Solzhenitsyn has lived to tell the tale; but of the reason for his survival he appears to have a very imperfect understanding. He was not given asylum in recognition of his great soul, or his art, or the strength of character that helped him to live and write. He was rescued by a principle, the principle of freedom of speech. His attack on another highly visible beneficiary of that principle should be most disturbing to those who have been the greatest admirers of his courage. □

Henri Rabasseire

Ghosts of the Cold War

Ghosts of the past haunt the political scene. Epithets like "cold war," "isolationism," and "appeasement" are heard again. While the Administration is trying to normalize relations with China or to find ways of accommodation with the future rulers of Africa, it hears charges from all sides: that it is selling Taiwan down the river, abandoning our allies in Africa, "playing the China card," which may provoke the Russians, and that its dilly-dallying between moderates and guerrillas in Africa may yet lose us the last chance to catch up with history on that continent.

Carter finds himself pretty much in the same quandary that Truman did 30 years ago: on the one side, the patriots accused him of "losing" China; on the other, Henry Wallace charged that he was missing the peace bus to Moscow. George Kennan, who had originally formulated the policy of "containment," now opposed the military implementation of that policy (NATO and German rearmament). Walter Lippmann, who had coined the term "cold war," gave Truman his candid advice to name Thomas Dewey secretary of state and then to resign so that a hopelessly compromised regime could be replaced speedily by the inevitable winner of the coming election.

It is in a similar stituation that one of the thinkers of that generation now offers his reflections on world politics, a summary of his life's experience. In an essay published earlier this year in *Encounter*, and also in a book entitled, *The Cloud of Danger* (New York: Little Brown, 1978), Mr. Kennan claims that the world-political theater is significantly different today from the one he analyzed in his famous "Mr. X" article of 1948: Stalin, the villain of that generation, has been dead for many years; the new Soviet leaders have allowed the dictatorship to soften and are concerned with the consolidation of their power sphere rather than its further expansion; Europe has recovered (as Mr. X indeed had hoped it would), and the rivalry between the superpowers has led to a new balance in whose preservation they have a common interest. Wise policies of détente have made it possible to negotiate the settlement of important issues without any military confrontation. Among these are the U.S. withdrawal from East Asia, the Helsinki and Berlin accords (recognizing Stalin's conquests of World War II, but setting a limit to further Soviet encroachments on Western Europe), the test stop and the nonproliferation agreement, the understanding on temporary limitations of strategic weapons, and the ongoing talks on more definite restraints.

Finally, Mr. Kennan states that the Soviet leaders have no desire to make war on the West or use force in expanding their sphere of domination elsewhere. They are in dire need, however, of Western know-how and technology, and therefore should be amenable to an era of good feeling—provided we extend to them a few more billion dollars' credit, refrain from insisting on fulfillment of the Helsinki undertakings to the letter, and don't get overly alarmed by their activities in the Third World.

Such a listing of the price for peace is apt to arouse the patriotic anger of some and the expert censure of others. Does the Soviet Union not owe us some $50 billion that we already have contributed—foolishly—to its expansion? Has it not fostered sedition and war in countries near and far? The recent coups in Afghanistan, Mauretania, Ethiopia, and South Yemen, the guerrilla wars in Africa must all be traced to Soviet arms deliveries, and 30,000 Cubans would not be in Africa without Russian support. The Soviet empire, far from liberalizing its system, shocks the world once again with show trials, and moreover there are signs of

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ideological tightening in both the Soviet Union and the satellite countries. The Soviet army, too, not content with numerical and qualitative superiority, is rapidly expanding its conventional equipment; the Soviet navy is nursing its Avis complex; Soviet rocketry is boosting the defense budget to the point where even its admitted total absorbs one-third of the gross national product. In East Germany, military instruction has just been decreed for school children.

The assumptions on which Kennan's analysis is based are plainly false, Richard Pipes and Leo Labedz, two specialists in Soviet studies, have replied, likewise in *Encounter*. As Kennan of all people should know, Russian diplomacy has at all times tried to compartmentalize its dealings with the outside world. It is not détente but raison d'état that dictates its efforts at appeasement in the West; for the Soviet Union distrusts its Eastern neighbor, while at the same time trying to expand its influence in the Third World. Let us not forget that Khrushchev made two explicit reservations when he offered "coexistence" to the West: ideological warfare can never be muted, he stated at the 20th Party Congress, and the Soviet Union will continue to support anticolonial wars of liberation (or what it decides to call that).

Precisely here, it seems to me, the anti-Soviet argument turns against itself. What do Messrs. Pipes and Labedz expect? That a big power sit still while great opportunities for expanding its influence are opening in the Third World? Of course it will favor détente in the West, and perhaps even a freeze on nuclear arms, when the sheer weight of its conventional military and political power is likely to earn it friends in other areas. This is elementary—a freshman lesson—along with other elementary rules, for instance that moralizing and indignation are poor counsel in international affairs, and that our views of another government's domestic system must not obstruct our search for mutual interests. The verb "to coexist" describes our relationship with people we *dis*like, not with those we like; I do not ask my grocer whether he beats his wife or practices bestiality. Nor does experience confirm the popular view that the more dictatorial and brutal a government is at home, the more aggressive it will be abroad. Often the opposite is true: democratic countries can be aggressive and imperialistic.

Mr. Kennan could have saved himself the trouble of painting the Russians white; but he succeeded in luring his opponents onto a terrain of total irrelevance. The question is not whether we ought to suspend SALT negotiations with a country that places dissenters in psychiatric wards and sends Cubans to Africa, but whether we can afford to have another nuclear arms race. The question is not whether the Soviet regime is distasteful to us but whether we can "coexist" with it (in the above sense) without having treaty relationships. The question is not whether we approve of the Soviet support for military coups in Africa and Asia but whether we can either stop them or live with them.

What Mr. Kennan seems to say, in his all-too-polite way, is that the United States and the West as a whole must become resigned to the balance of power that has developed in the world during the last decade. We have not recognized yet that we did not win the cold war and that we lost the Vietnam war (though Mr. Kennan, of course, would be the last to use such blunt words), and we refuse to admit that the dominoes we set up deliberately are beginning to fall. In the doctrine of containment, 30 years ago, Kennan told us practically the same thing: we must recognize the status quo that has been created through Hitler's wars. If to some people that doctrine then sounded aggressive, it was not Mr. Kennan's fault, and when John Foster Dulles interpreted it to mean "roll-back," Kennan replaced the containment doctrine with the doctrine of "disengagement" though he remained critical of détente (which is not a policy but a stratagem, a tactic). What he now proposes sounds like a doctrine of confinement: we have neither the means nor the nerve to fight the expansion of Soviet influence in Africa and Asia, so let's accept it gracefully and try to hold the Soviet government to the conditions of coexistence in those areas where it has willingly accepted coexistence with us.

Call this neoisolationism, appeasement, or illusionism, Mr. Kennan's views have at least the merit of stark realism. They shake us out of the delusions of "the American Century"—although, being a ghost of the '50s, he may not have noticed that hardly any of us have lately used the phrase. They remind us of the unpleasant fact that, whether we are first or second in power, we have to coexist with the Soviet Union, just as Denmark, whether it is 30th or 31st, has to coexist with all the stronger powers.

II

OUR FRIEND RICHARD LOWENTHAL has also replied to Mr. Kennan in a superbly lucid essay in *Encounter*. He dismisses Kennan's premises but

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recognizes his purpose and substitutes for Kennan's resignation an activist philosophy of dealing with power. Lowenthal agrees with other experts in the field that it is not now the Soviet leaders' intention to attack the West. He interprets the recent buildup of Soviet armed might as having two purposes: to discredit the American assertion of a nuclear umbrella for our friends, and to bring the pressure of conventional arms superiority to bear on the targets of Soviet penetration. He concedes that the Soviet effort is not blind and irrational but perfectly calculated. That, however, does not make it any less serious, and precisely because it is rational it must and can be countered by rational moves on our side. These consist of the traditional tools of diplomacy: deterrence by measures that would make further expansion too costly for the Soviet Union, and rewards that would make cooperation with the West attractive to its leaders. To President Carter's false alternative—cooperation or contest—he thus opposes a judicious mix of incentives and threats, "linking" concessions in one field to counterconcession in another. Lowenthal believes "that an inherent linkage exists, at least in the long run, between certain forms of economic East-West cooperation and Soviet willingness to exercise restraint in the arms race and in [the use of] violent action in crisis areas."

This attractive program may be a good guide, as Lowenthal says, "in the long run"—but certainly not in the melée of short-term decisions, and especially not when Soviet leaders are hard pressed to assert their effectiveness and, moreover, don't see at the moment any need to spare American sensibilities. Besides, such short-term decisions—e.g., the support of Arab aggression in the third Sinai war—tend to have long-run consequences. They create obligations to stick with a new ally, and they entail shifts in the power balance that in turn have further consequences.

More important, Lowenthal's reliance on "linkage" has one decisive flaw: like every other government but in important respects more so, the Soviet leaders do not consider all matters of contention equally capable of being traded. Obviously, neither we nor they will trade the constitution and internal makeup of the country for some temporary advantage. I am especially surprised to read that Lowenthal, in agreement with some of the Western press, believes that economic incentives can be offered to obtain major political concessions. That may be true of American diplomacy; but the entire history of Soviet diplomacy shows that the U.S.S.R. may have used economic tools to achieve political ends but has never hesitated to accept economic hardship rather than lose a point of prestige or abandon a position of political or strategic importance.

Roughly, the Soviet doctrine of diplomacy distinguishes three tiers of values:

- Matters involving ideology or the sovereignty of the country are not tradable at all (contrary to his signature at Helsinki, Brezhnev also places the suppression of dissent in this category).
- Political crisis areas, arms races and the like are recognized as interconnected; precisely for that reason the Soviet leadership is constantly tempted to create trouble spots and nuisance areas that can then be traded for essential targets. Trading in this area is strictly tit-for-tat.
- Matters that enjoy high priority for the West but are of minor importance to the Soviet Union, such as emigration of Jews, consular agreements, control or freedom of media, fishing rights and trade, may also be negotiated for good-will and "atmosphere."

The Soviet diplomats like to trade items in the third category for items in the second; Americans, by contrast, have tried to move economic aid, such as the export of technology or the most-favored-nation status, from the third into the second category. For obvious reasons, we cannot use our potentially most powerful threat—a refusal to export grain. The Russians might be happy to let a few thousand Jews emigrate if in exchange they could gain access to the U.S. market (provided, however, they don't have to sign anything implying a U.S. right to interfere with the relationship between the Soviet government and its subjects).

The sad conclusion is that the area of "linkage" is much smaller than it might have appeared at first sight. Moreover, on certain objects neither side can make a concession in order to obtain a counterconcession in some other field. For instance, both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. wish to get the best balance in the SALT agreements; neither side would take a less advantageous deal in return for a loan or for the release of Jews. It is in the nature of the nuclear balance to require an agreement without reference to any other matters. Therefore, it is utterly naive to propose that the U.S. should hint at difficulties in obtaining ratification of a SALT agreement unless the Russians softened their stand on Africa, on dissenters, etc. If they did that, they would have to expect the U.S. to yield some point in SALT that it cannot safely abandon.

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Given these limitations, which are augmented by the present weakness of the American government and the lack of consensus among the Western allies, the danger arises that the American public might react to its frustration with ideologies similar to those that 30 years ago were the product of a similar quandary. Then we had neither the means nor the will to change the results of World War II. We acknowledged our impotence by producing the twin ideologies of isolationism and cold war. Both amounted to immobilism, hardening of the frontier, inability to break out of the framework of the status quo. It was sheer luck that the ensuing arms race did not degenerate into hot war, and the cold war developed a tendency to be frozen, at least in Europe. We cannot be so sure that the present war of position in the Middle East and in Africa will remain "cold"; it rather has the makings of a hot war. Both superpowers share a heavy burden of responsibility in such a situation. But it seems to me that the Soviet leaders today are much more prepared to go to the brink than Stalin, who—contrary to his reputation—was a coward and took no risk unless he was sure of success.

III

THESE ARE GRIM FACTS, and we are in grave danger of heading for another confrontation. The American President has temporarily lost control of policy-making in the wake of Vietnam and Watergate. To regain hold of the rudder, President Carter engaged in a cold-war maneuver of ideological warfare—the campaign for civil rights abroad, which may be popular with our liberal press but violates the rules of sound diplomatic practice and diverts our attention from the real issue, which is the preservation of the power balance. It may go against our grain, but we must know that Carter's campaign on behalf of dissenters in the Soviet Union was considered there a provocation. The Russian leaders might be disposed to let more people emigrate—provided we don't dare them to do so. They are concerned about losing face. Therefore, even the appearance of an attempt to influence their minorities policies, or to use a Soviet minority for our purposes, will prompt them to retaliate.

If the Administration hints that show trials in Moscow will create a climate that might be unfavorable to the ratification of a possible SALT agreement, it is handing Congress a dangerous weapon. Instead of freeing the conduct of foreign policy from the vicissitudes of demagoguery and ideology, as he should, the President is asking Congress to bind his hands. Instead of seeking a wider margin of maneuver for political initiatives, he uses his impotence vis-à-vis Congress as an alibi for his impotence vis-à-vis the increase of Soviet power and its drive into a power vacuum. Like the late John Foster Dulles, he makes cold-war noises with a toothless mouth.

President Carter's remark in Frankfurt that he would pray for German reunification is the kind of irresponsible talk that encourages German revanchism and needlessly irritates the Russians. The U.S. has no means, except prayer, to undo the Helsinki Agreement, in which it recognized the partition of Germany. To insist publicly that the Soviet government keep its part of the bargain—the so-called Third Basket, which had been included at the time to assuage Western consciences but was hardly thought by Mr. Kissinger to be of immediate practical value—is in Soviet eyes a renewal of ideological warfare. Unfortunately, it also hampers the private deals that the West Germans have been able to make with their Eastern neighbor and the Soviet Union to obtain relief for individuals. At the Belgrade Conference humanitarians and civil-rights advocates were often annoyed by the U.S. delegates' intransigence in politicizing these issues, taking them out of the humanitarian and placing them in a political, cold-war context.

The danger is that we reduce the complexities of a global diplomacy, once again, to the simplicity of a bi-polar contest. Let the American government take a leaf from the book of the big corporations. They deal with each situation on its merits. For instance, far from instigating the U.S. government to "fight Communism," the Gulf Oil Corporation has accommodated itself to the Néto Regime in Angola and, as Ambassador Young blurted out, considers even the Cuban presence there "a stabilizing factor" (translated: without the Cubans, the Company's installations could not be run and the Company's shareholders would earn no dividends). Some timid steps in that direction have been made in recent months; movements that receive Soviet weapons are no longer taboo. We are finding ways of talking to SWAPO and the PLO; we are recognizing the strength of the guerrilla movement in Rhodesia.

IV

I DON'T THINK that the United States is as impotent as Mr. Kennan seems to imply. He still views the global scene from the vantage point of the 1950s; he

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still preaches coexistence and détente, which are really but the reverse side of the cold war. We must overcome the Vietnam complex, the assumption that either we or they are "right," the urge to force whoever associates with "them" to become their avowed and permanent follower. The stories of Begin and Sadat carry the plain lesson that it need not be so. President Truman had the courage to support Tito, a Communist; President Nixon had the courage to go to Peking. But our view is distorted by our craving for "system." As the "haves" we display a natural predilection for settling all questions at once with the main assailant, and we would like to have him then guarantee, once and for all, the new status quo. This is far from the reality of world politics. There are many claimants who can only gain from any redistribution of power, and they will consider every new agreement a jumping board for new demands rather than a once-for-all-time world order.

It is understandable, therefore, that the Soviet diplomats, from their point of view, have a preference for piecemeal settlements, and that we tend to regard as a Soviet victory any occasion where we have to conclude piecemeal agreements; we confirm their conquests, indeed, but in return we should get guarantees that are not purely verbal. On the other hand, we tend to think of "linkage" as a good idea because we hope to use our economic power to extort political concessions from other countries—a procedure that must be handled with tact. Weak countries resent and denounce it as imperialist, under the label of "strings attached." In Europe, on the other hand, we are using our military presence to obtain agreement on economic measures that we favor.

But if "linkage," which seems to have become the Administration's favored diplomatic tool, is to succeed, we must also coordinate our policies in Europe with those in other areas. This is not to say, of course, that we must always take the Europeans' word for gospel.

Nor do I say that "linkage" and the yearning for a once-for-all-time settlement are bad in themselves. Of course, one would like to have as few dealings as possible with people who keep "their" Negroes segregated or who detain "their" Jews from emigrating. But who are these people? The Russian physicists whom we would punish for their government's treatment of dissidents? The hungry blacks in South Africa whom some senators would like to punish for their jailers' beating of prisoners? We should not childishly display our impotence by venting our anger at substitute targets.

If one wishes to punish the Soviets for the Shcharansky outrage, one should consider acts that more realistically promise to achieve something. For instance, the Olympic games in 1980 are of great interest to the Soviet government as a token of prestige, as an opportunity for propaganda, and also as a source of income. Although in general I think it is bad policy to politicize sports events, in this case the threat of a boycott might move the Soviet government to abstain from further show trials. But the boycott proposal would have to come from *private* persons, and it would have to be submitted to the Olympics committee, a private organization. As this agency might also be requested to exclude South Africa, it would be embarrassing for the Soviet government to appear in the same dock with a racist regime.

As a general practice, however, we should allow contacts between people to proceed without political guidance. Cuban dancers should perform at the Met, and American physicists should visit Peking without feeling that someone is "playing the China card." Arrangements for cultural exchanges should be left to S. Hurok or his heirs and should not be used to express the pleasure or displeasure of the State Department.

Still less should contacts of greater importance be at the mercy of unrelated issues. This may occasionally be tough on our sense of decency. President Johnson abruptly broke off the first SALT negotiations when Brezhnev sent his troops to quash Dubček's "communism with a human face"; in fact, the outrage was so enormous that neither the American people nor our European allies would have understood a more Machiavellian attitude. Yet, two precious years were lost, and Western diplomats were unable to exploit the Russians' moral weakness to obtain then a favorable arms agreement. Instead, both sides continued the arms race and pushed it to a point where a new balance seems all but impossible to achieve. The Brezhnev in whose political survival we now place our hope of an arms freeze is still the same who gave the fatal signal to invade Czechoslovakia ten years ago. We certainly would be better off now had we not allowed our moral indignation to override our judgment of the realities of power. Brezhnev needs an arms agreement less today and is less capable of imposing one on his generals. Let not our moralism now stand in the way of negotiations that are vital for the survival of mankind.

Much as a mere freeze in the arms race might be worth having, let us not forget that the state in which it will leave the balance of power is highly

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undesirable. If we cannot go from there to disarmament, or if it should be a bad agreement—one that gives neither of the powers incentives to go on negotiating for further measures of arms control, defusing issues of contention and of détente—the benefit will be almost nil, except that one might be thankful for any symbol of political, as opposed to emotional and ideological, attitudes in dealing with the Soviet power.

The danger is that Western publics might react to the situation of 1978 with a repetition of the cold war reflexes that were understandable in 1948. There is a superficial resemblance in the premises: a disappointed hope for a settlement on the one side, expansionism on the other; a feeling of powerlessness in the face of moral and political outrages. I am pained to admit that we have even less hope for changing the Soviet system now then 30 years ago. But if we wish to stop the atrocities on the other side of the Iron Curtain, we should not pay ransom for their victims. (The West German government is paying millions every year to obtain the release of hostages taken arbitrarily by the criminal government of East Germany—a humanitarianism that only helps to perpetuate the inhumane practice.)

At the end of such an essay, readers may expect some specific recommendations of policy. But I am concerned with attitudes rather than with concrete measures. Any specific policy may have different meanings in different contexts. What matters is that we learn to deal with Communist powers in the same way as with others; that we consider every issue on its own merits; that we don't relate every shift of alliances in Africa to an all-embracing East-West conflict but, again, deal with local issues as local issues, defusing rather than emphasizing their cold-war aspects (whose existence need not be denied). We should not refuse to negotiate where negotiating promises better results than sulking; but when we do negotiate we should strive for tangible, enforcible concessions rather than for concessions that look good on paper. Obviously, we should not refrain from using the power resources we have, nor from exploiting differences within the Communist orbit. We should encourage neutralism among nations tilting toward the Soviet Union and Eurocommunism among groups opposed to our own system. We should accommodate ourselves to shifts in the power balance that have taken place, but we need not yield to further pressures. We must have the courage to stand by allies and to defend interests that are vital to the West as a whole. □

Alberto Ronchey

Terror in Italy: After Moro's Murder

With the 54-day stand-off that stretched from the kidnapping to the murder of Aldo Moro, the strategists of the terrorist warfare, which for years has been bloodying Italy, set themselves a double objective. First: to put the hostage on trial, both as a person and symbol of an "objective enemy," since they consider themselves agents authorized by history with the right of life and death over everyone. And second: to use the threat of the death sentence to force an exchange of prisoners and virtual recognition as an "armed party," in outright defiance of the law and articles 18 and 49 of the Italian Constitution, with the aim of bringing about the disintegration of the legal system.

The ideological terrorism of our time always includes, as a necessary element, a sacrificial trial and, if possible, a confession—from the solemn show trials of the Stalinist period to the occult rituals of the guerrilla bands. In Italy, for a number of years now the terrorists have put on trial the people they capture and staged countertrials of those who judge their captured comrades. But if they thought that Aldo Moro could reveal startling state secrets they were misled by their own ideology, according to which a secret conspiracy is always afoot. Moro could not reveal "the conspiratorial plans of the supergovernment" that the extremists imagined. All he could tell them was the grimy details of that cellar or subgovernment, with which everyone in Italy is familiar who reads the newspapers.

The second stage of the terrorists' timetable—the exchange of prisoners and virtual recognition of the "armed party"—was rejected by all of Italy's constitutional forces, for it would have caused the collapse of the state apparatus and perhaps the "Lebanonization" of an already disrupted society. Every attempt at a bloodless solution was limited by the inviolability of the legal system, without which even bloodier consequences would follow at some later date.

SO THE TERRORIST CHALLENGE did not achieve its aims. But, one must add, the state was only able to defend a legal principle, while enduring the burdens of impotence, inefficiency, shortsighted-

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ness, and the reductive interpretations that for some time have been reserved for the guerrilla phenomenon. Because of disastrous mistakes accumulated over the years, the public power has not been able to carry out its proper tasks: above all, that of rescuing the hostage from the terrorist organization, which proclaims itself at war with a state in which there is no death penalty and sentences to death the people who serve that state.

The political system has been subjected to exceptional stress, yet it seems to have mobilized certain reserves of energy. For instance, one must acknowledge the example set by the majority party, the Demo-Christians [the Christian Democratic party] "under fire." In the last year they have been subjected to 28 attempts with firearms aimed at their leaders and 146 attacks on their various headquarters, 45 of which have been destroyed. Then, with the kidnapping of Moro, the party has had to confront the problem of whether or not to deal with the terrorists. It has had to reckon with that psychological change, frequent among kidnapping victims and particularly acute in the case of Moro, which experts call "the Stockholm syndrome" (identification with the kidnappers, hostility toward the outside world). The party has had to undergo a storm of letters from the secret Gulag dugout beneath the lawful state. And it has had to bear the accusation of trying through the ritual sacrifice of one of its members to attain a kind of collective absolution for the kind of government it has administered over the last 30 years.

The majority of the Demo-Christians have never known the violent and tragic aspects of political experience, such as other parties had suffered through decades of clandestine activity. One might think that faced with these harsh trials they would have left to others, above all to the Communists, the task of representing the sense of the state. But this did not happen. Moreover, it should be pointed out that almost any Demo-Christian leader might find himself in Moro's situation at any moment, knowing quite well by now that the reply of the public power to a terrorist blackmail attempt will in no case be different. "Political leaders," as Ugo La Malfa, leader of Italy's Republican party, has summed it up, "have the duty to care not for their own lives but rather for the lives of the citizenry." By deciding as they did in the Moro case, Demo-Christians have also decided their own possible fate. If such resoluteness may discourage the terrorists from attempting further kidnappings, the Demo-Christian leaders will nevertheless still be exposed to reprisals.

Aldo Moro was the victim of the degradation wrought by a revolutionary myth that does not subsist in any of the modern advanced societies, but makes its explosive appearance among the vandalistic utopias and destructive social peculiarities that are both the causes and consequences of Italian disorder. The victim of an exciting word—revolution—which has become equivocal and today is putrified, one of those words that Carlo Emilio Gadda, the wisest Italian writer of our time, regarded as the cause of excessive and senseless acts: "Sometimes they direct the fate of their children toward the darkness—for a word! For a word that is marvelous to say, marvelous to be heard! And then they pile one stupidity on top of another."

What's more, Moro has been the victim of the virulent political iconoclasm that arose in Italy in opposition to all those images personifying power after 30 years of government without a change, due to the lack of a realistic and acceptable alternative to the majority party. It fell to him a year ago to warn his fellow Demo-Christians that it would not be easy for anyone, in such circumstances, to face up to the scandals of their party (Lockheed, etc.) and the whole question of the government in a summary public trial. And it fell to Moro to undergo precisely such a trial in that Gulag that the Red Brigades have set up in anticipation of their dreamed-of conquest of power.

Moro has been the Italian guerrilla terrorists' chosen major "scapegoat." And the special aspect of the case is that he was murdered after 54 days of waiting: it was "murder in slow motion." But the persons murdered already number 80, ever since there appeared on the scene the dark shadow of a group that grants itself the ideological right of life or death over anyone whomsoever.

Moro is not the first victim, and he will not be the last. In the ever-increasing number of daily attacks, terrorism now strikes whomever it wishes, as it wishes, where and when it wishes. Among the periodic waves of terrorism described by historians, the phenomenon has never before reached so vast a scale in a liberal democracy. To contend that the Italian situation is similar to many others is a pitiful consolation, which does not try to assess the real scope and nature of the phenomenon.

Besides the tyrannical or colonial regimes that are usually accompanied by terrorism, or the countries suffering from ethnic and religious conflicts in which terrorism is rampant, among modern industrial societies terrorist guerrilla warfare can be found only in Italy, West Germany,

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and Japan, and with varying intensity according to their economic and political conditions. According to the analysis of Karl Dietrich Bracher of the University of Bonn, these three industrial societies have certain traits in common: (1) each is a democracy that came into existence only after defeat in a war; (2) each suffered the rapid replacement of an accepted system of values; (3) each has experienced the improvisation of an ideology of material prosperity under the impetus of the three economic "miracles" that were then interrupted by the oil crisis of 1973-74; (4) all three governments have been accused of being lackeys to some foreign supergovernment. There is another common trait: all three are nations on the frontiers between the great international blocs.

In Italy the guerrilla warfare of global ideological confrontation advances on two fronts. On one side, there are the compact clandestine "columns" of the Red Brigade, which carry out striking terrorist exploits on a military footing. And on the other, there are the so-called autonomous collectives, devoted to the systematic propagation of intimidatory violence, which like "colonies of moles" enlarge their areas of subterranean control.

The social bases of the two complementary strategies can be found in all the disintegrating factors thrown up in Italy by the crisis of the last decade: the siege of the uprooted and marginal masses in the cities; the collective alienation that suddenly came into existence with the collapse of the public educational system; the ideologized prison revolts; the violent conflicts in the factories; the fragmentation of the Leninist ideology that is a result of the Italian Communist party's quiet shift in policy; the stalemate among the major political parties and thus a government that has gone unchanged for 30 years; the widening gap between the available economic resources and the people's growing expectations, and the opportunism of political power.

IT WILL NOT BE the demonstrations and strikes of protest against terrorism, so much like those mass ceremonies in India that are called "invocations for rain," which will lead to control over the areas of recruitment for armed extremism. Nor does the immediacy of the danger offer those long stretches of time that would be necessary to overcome the chief social contradictions. So direct a threat should impose a suspension of party maneuverings among the constitutional forces.

What is needed is a radical change in the common way of thinking and in the prevailing rules of conduct—a change that would affect both the egocentric fatalism of the rulers and the contradictory demands (due to pietism or simply contentiousness) of the ruled. Urgent above all is the necessity for a truce with the "Peronistic" trade unionism, a stop to corporative and municipal quarrelsomeness, and to those generous indulgences on the basis of some abstract theory that cause the paralysis of essential services, since the most propitious terrain for terrorist guerrilla warfare is a disorganized society. If none of these things are done, we will soon see not only Red Brigades but also Yellow or White ones.

Even outside the political society, among the important figures of the "civil society" there is no longer any space for "playing with the fire of words." In the verbal inflation of the last decade, almost any nonsensicality could get a hearing provided it seemed to conform to the "spirit of the age." Now many of these nonsensicalities, though much simplified, can be found in the proclamations of the terrorists. Often even the most privileged middle-class persons have been anxious to appear so far to the left that the most harassed and exasperated assembly-line worker in the Fiat-Mirafiori plant could not go more to the left than they did merely by means of words—that is, without a pistol. Now, after so many years and so many erudite and nimble public advisers, who do not stop quoting from the manuals of South American guerrilla warfare, it is not surprising that some people have taken all these words seriously and finally want somehow to try to make this blessed revolution.

Other nations, the major nations, have learned from cruel historic experience the absolute necessity of establishing and maturing a rigorous "sense of the state"; but the Italian nation has not gone through anything like a religious war or a great civil war. This historic inexperience seems to exert the irresistible attraction of the abyss, where crime and political hatred are superimposed on the many factors that combine to disintegrate the social fabric, conspiring to cause the common ruin of the classes and groups now struggling against each other. It might be said that the guerrilla warfare that exists in Italy is not sufficient without the civil war that may well take place, hurling Italy into the worst conditions of our time. Those who believe that the worst has already taken place and that by now nothing is left to be lost have little imagination or information. Life in Italy can also be reduced to the conditions of Buenos Aires during the last years or, worse, to those of Beirut or Addis Ababa during recent months.

Translated from the Italian by RAYMOND ROSENTHAL □

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Vietnam and Cambodia

Comments by Noam Chomsky, Hans J. Morgenthau, Michael Walzer

Recent events in Cambodia, even if reports exaggerate the magnitude of killings and enslavement, are so terrible that a number of commentators have seized upon them to call into question the validity of opposition to the American role in Vietnam. The argument made by such writers is that South Vietnamese governments supported by the U.S. were no doubt corrupt and repressive, but never to the point of the present Cambodian government's total regimentation and even, apparently, genocide; hence, they say, it was appropriate to support the anti-Communist South Vietnamese as a "lesser evil" whose victory would at least have prevented the horrors of Communist Cambodia. They also taunt opponents of the Vietnam war who had been outspoken in criticizing South Vietnamese repressions while failing to be equally outspoken about what is now happening in Cambodia.

We think the issues raised here are sufficiently important to warrant a discussion among those who, for often sharply different reasons, opposed the Vietnam war. Do the recent events in Cambodia warrant a reconsideration of our opposition to the Vietnam war? Is it true that liberal and left intellectuals have been amiss in not criticizing the Cambodian Communist regime, and if so, why? Or would you agree with those who believe that it was precisely the reactionary character of the South Vietnamese regimes supported by the U.S. that enabled the Communists to proceed with their more efficient and massive kinds of repression? In short, what do you think of all this?

Noam Chomsky

"Do the recent events in Cambodia warrant a reconsideration of our opposition to the Vietnam war?" Consider the factual and moral premises that allow this question to be seriously raised.

Let us assume the accuracy of the condemnations of the Khmer Rouge (noting, however, that the susceptibility of intellectuals to fabricated atrocity stories has been no less notorious since World War I than their apologetics for some favored state, and that skepticism is aroused in this case by the many documented falsehoods). On this assumption, should we reconsider opposition to the Vietnam war?

One who raises this question must be assuming (1) that the U.S. war was intended to avert Khmer Rouge barbarity, or might have had this likely effect; and (2) that the U.S. has the right to exercise force and violence to avert potential crimes.

Assumption (1) is ludicrous in the light of the factual record. Cambodia was an island of relative tranquillity prior to the American

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invasion of 1970, though it had repeatedly been attacked by American and U.S.-backed forces since 1957 and there was limited local insurgency, aroused by government repression, by the late 1960s.As Vietnamese were driven to a narrow border strip by the savage American military operations of early 1967, direct U.S. attacks on Cambodia escalated. By May 1967 the Pentagon was concerned that Cambodia was "becoming more and more important as a supply base—now of food and medicines, perhaps ammunition later," an obvious consequence of U.S. operations in Vietnam and Laos. In March 1969, shortly after the "secret" bombings began, Sihanouk vainly called upon the Western press to publicize his government's protest over the "criminal attacks" on Khmer peasants. The 1970 invasion helped organize the Khmer Rouge rebellion as thousands of peasants rallied to the resistance under the impact of the vicious bombing and ground attacks of the U.S. military and the Vietnamese forces it organized. Charles Meyer, who had long been close to ruling circles in Cambodia, warned then that "it is difficult to imagine the intensity of the hatred [of the peasants] for those who destroyed their villages and their possessions" *(Derrière le sourire khmer)*. This was well before the murderous American bombings of the 1970s, which surely inflamed peasant hatred and desire for revenge.

Those who failed to devote their energies to ending the American war in Indochina bear a double burden of guilt: for the atrocities committed under American initiative, and for the legacy of starvation, disease, hatred and revenge that was a direct and predicted consequence of the attack on rural Cambodia. Similar remarks apply in the case of Vietnam and Laos.

Assumption (2) has not been defended explicitly. One can easily see why. If the U.S. is entitled to launch a major war to avert potential barbarism, then *a fortiori* it is entitled to invade countries where state violence currently proceeds; say, much of Latin America, turned into a horror chamber in one of the recent successes of U.S. foreign policy. Surely, the absurdities of this position are obvious.

Furthermore, one may ask why the U.S. should be uniquely privileged to serve as global judge and executioner. By virtue of its historic role in defense of freedom and human rights within its own sphere of influence, perhaps? Again, discussion is superfluous.

One who advocates the resort to force must present an overwhelmingly powerful argument. There is ample reason to adopt as a guiding principle the restriction on use of force, now codified in law, to self-defense against armed attack. In fact, the official claim always was that the U.S. was defending South Vietnam from "aggression from the North." Internal documents were more honest. Immediately after the Geneva accords of 1954, the U.S. undertook to help its clients "to defeat local Communist subversion or rebellion not constituting armed attack," with potential "use of U.S. military forces either locally or against the external source of such subversion or rebellion"—all as determined unilaterally by the U.S. It was the secret plan that was pursued; the official defense is no less ludicrous than assumption (1).

The U.S. at once installed a client regime in South Vietnam that abrogated the terms of the Geneva settlement and initiated a program of repression and massacre. When resistance ensued, the U.S. turned to direct military action by 1962 and an outright invasion of South Vietnam in 1965. Government analysts never doubted that the South Vietnamese enemy was the only mass-based political force, while the regimes the U.S. imposed as a basis for its intervention had negligible support. The peace treaty signed but immediately undermined by the U.S. in January 1973 was virtually a paraphrase, in essentials, of the program of the South Vietnamese forces that the U.S. was dedicated to destroy.

By the time the first North Vietnamese battalion was detected in the South—more than two months after the initiation of the systematic bombing of the North and the far more extensive bombing of the South—more than 150,000 South Vietnamese had been killed "under the crushing weight of American

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armor, napalm, jet bombers and, finally, vomiting gasses," according to the judgment of Bernard Fall, a committed hawk who turned against the war because he feared that "Vietnam as a cultural and historic entity . . . is threatened with extinction" as "the countryside literally dies under the blows of the . . . [American] military machine." The U.S. won its filthy war in South Vietnam, decimating the local forces that resisted American violence and the peasant society in which they were rooted, thus guaranteeing North Vietnamese dominance of the wreckage and leaving ample opportunity for the hypocrites who now bewail this consequence of the American war that they supported.

Now we are asked whether opposition to the U.S. attack on rural South Vietnam, later all Indochina, was legitimate, in the light of postwar suffering and atrocities that are in large measure a result of this aggression. With comparable logic, Germans might have asked whether opposition to Nazi aggression should be reconsidered after the massacre of tens of thousands in France under American civil-military rule.

We are sometimes told that "the story is more complex." That is true; the real world is more complex than our descriptions, a fact that may be exploited by the cynical or deluded to dismiss its salient features as a guide to attitude and action.

Like most colonial wars, the U.S. war in Indochina was in part a civil conflict, though in scale and savagery the U.S. intervention had few historical parallels. Such wars are generally brutal, and the domestic losers often suffer grievously. Those who devoted themselves to ending American aggression and who now work to reverse the inhuman policy of refusing reparations or even aid to its victims have a moral right to condemn repressive acts of the regimes that have arisen from the ruins. Comparably, anti-Nazi resisters had the moral right to condemn the atrocities committed after liberation. Others may well be accurate in their condemnation, but it reeks to high heaven.

The American media have been deluged with denunciations of postwar Indochina, while more favorable accounts, however credible, receive little notice; and murderous repression within the American sphere—in Timor or Uruguay, for example—is consistently ignored. That should not surprise us. As had been predicted, a major effort is underway to reconstruct the interventionist ideology that eroded as popular opposition to the Vietnam war developed. History must be rewritten and principle revised to conform to the needs of a power that will be called upon to lead the industrial capitalist world in the "North-South" conflict. We read that we must overcome our "Vietnam hang-up" and be willing to use force to defend our interests, often disguised in cynical humanitarian rhetoric. Or we are informed that revolutionary regimes are capable of great brutality, as has been obvious for centuries, and that "we" should rise to the defense of peoples, not states; reasonable enough (and no less familiar) if the term "we" refers to individuals, though it is easily transmuted to refer to state power in a new version of colonialist doctrine.

One who protests barbarism or repression must consider the probable human consequences of his acts. That is why, for example, Amnesty International urges that one write politely to the most miserable tyrant. Unless the goal of protest is self-aggrandizement or service to one's state, finite energies will be distributed in accordance with likely impact. A Russian who condemns American behavior in Vietnam or Chile may speak the truth, but we do not admire his courage or moral integrity. Similar considerations apply here. The central responsibility for Americans is to try to modify policies that we can influence; primarily, those of the American government and its client regimes, or elsewhere, when there is a likelihood that protest can contribute to the relief of human misery.

Returning to the specific questions of this symposium: events in postwar Indochina amply reinforce the moral imperative of protest and resistance against the American

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war. Principled opponents of that war should now devote themselves with no less energy to attempting to heal its wounds and help its victims—those in exile, those who are oppressed, and those who are struggling to construct a viable society from the ruins left by American terror. If honest inquiry reveals terror and repression, protest is legitimate. One who undertakes it must ask how his acts may help those who suffer, bearing in mind also the domestic consequences and the fate of future victims of the interventionist ideologies now being reconstructed. One will of course win acclaim in the West by joining the chorus of protest focused on those who have escaped the Western orbit, but for ugly reasons. It is easy to avoid these considerations, but an honest person with true human concern will not lightly do so. Individuals may differ in their assessment of these complex issues, but they deserve more careful attention than they often receive. We cannot escape the world in which we live, inconvenient though that fact may be. □

Hans J. Morgenthau

The events in Cambodia raise in an acute way some fundamental questions about American foreign policy in general and our policies in Southeast Asia in particular.

The chain of events that culminated in the destruction of Cambodian society and, perhaps, of the Cambodian people started with the American extension of the Vietnam war into Cambodia through the massive bombing of Cambodian territory. It was the policy of the Cambodian ruler, Prince Sihanouk, to keep Cambodia out of the armed conflict between the United States and North Vietnam. It was the policy of the United States to involve Cambodia in the active military operations in order to facilitate victory in the Vietnam war. There exists then a causal nexus between American policy with regard to Cambodia and the catastrophe that has recently befallen the country. In other words, if the United States had not made Cambodia an active participant in the Vietnam war, Cambodia would, in all likelihood, have been spared the recent catastrophe.

This is not to say that the United States bears a direct moral responsibility for what has been happening in Cambodia. It only demonstrates the continuous moral responsibility statesmen bear for the unforeseen and unforeseeable consequences of their actions.

It is quite another matter to assume that because of this causal nexus the United States had a moral obligation to prevent what has been happening in Cambodia or at least to alleviate the present sufferings of the Cambodian people. First of all, moral—as legal—obligations are subject to the qualifications expressed in the principle of Roman law that nobody is obligated beyond his capacity *(ultra vires nemo obligatur)*. Thus, even if one had held the United States morally responsible for what has been happening in Cambodia, it would not be held responsible for any particular policy of implementing that moral obligation. For obviously, even if the United States were resolved to act it would be unable to do so without disproportionate risks and losses. This is indeed the decisive point.

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The critics of the opponents of the Vietnam war conclude from the present Cambodian catastrophe that the United States should not have reconciled itself to losing the Vietnam war at the price of the misery, if not destruction, of the Cambodian people. But aside from the impossibility of foreseeing all the consequences of the loss of the Vietnam war, to forestall all possible consequences of the loss by winning it at whatever price would have violated the basic principle of foreign and military policy that the risks taken and losses incurred in a particular action must be proportionate to the chances for the success of that action. In truth, the risks that we were taking and the losses we incurred in the Vietnam war were already out of all proportion to the chances for success. Should we have taken additional risks in order to save Cambodia from a catastrophe unforeseen and unforeseeable with an at best illusive chance for success?

Thus I conclude that the moral case for resistance to the Vietnam war has not been impaired, but rather strengthened, by the catastrophe that has befallen Cambodia. □

Michael Walzer

It was never necessary, in order to oppose the American war in Vietnam, to defend the Communist regime in the North or the likely successor regime in the South. One could wish, as most writers in *Dissent* did, that a "third force" had emerged, capable of rallying the country and challenging Communist hegemony in the nationalist movement. But such a force did not exist in sufficient strength; nor could 500,000 American troops ever have evoked it, even if that had been their purpose. Before the massive American intervention began, the Communists had already succeeded in making themselves the chief representatives of Vietnamese nationalism. No doubt, they were bad representatives; some of us in the antiwar movement knew that all along. Nevertheless, their success undercut the moral and political rationale for intervention. The U.S. sent its troops into Vietnam to reverse the verdict of a local struggle, and we could only do that, with some hope of winning, by escalating and prolonging the struggle and imposing enormous losses on the Vietnamese people. I don't know how to weigh those losses against the subsequent costs of Communist tyranny. Who can say what the extent of the death and destruction would have been had we actually fought our way to "victory"? Surely the key point is that we had no right to make such calculations at all—not on behalf of another nation and against the wishes of most of its people.

Escalating the conflict had the effect of expanding it as well, and ultimately of dragging down the neutralist government of Cambodia. It may be that Cambodian neutralism would not in any case have survived the Communist seizure of Saigon. When the French first established their colonial empire in Indochina, around 1850, the Vietnamese were in the process of conquering Cambodia, and that process might simply have been resumed, even if Sihanouk had remained in power. It may yet be resumed: the end of European rule has often resulted in the quick

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reestablishment of precolonial political patterns. But the present regime of the Khmer Rouge, with its peculiarly primitive brand of Communism, is not the result of Vietnamese expansion; it is the direct, if unintended, result of the American war.

The Cambodian Communists are, by all reports, fanatic and brutal rulers. If the massacres described in the French and American press have actually taken place on the scale reported, and if they are continuing, then it seems to me that foreign intervention to stop the killing—what the lawyers call "humanitarian intervention"—is clearly justified. Perhaps only the Chinese could do the job quickly and economically, on the model of the Indian intervention in Bengal. But they show little interest, and are in fact supporters of the Khmer Rouge against the Soviet-supported Vietnamese. Their alliances are geopolitical, not humanitarian. Whether they take action or not, however, there is nothing that the U.S. can do, beyond recording and protesting the slaughter. Not only do we lack the capacity for a surgical strike, we also lack credibility as defenders of human life in Southeast Asia.

American rightists have seized upon the Cambodian massacres in order to argue that our 1970 invasion was, so to speak, a prospective intervention against a bloodbath we rightly expected. The truth is that we had other purposes in mind, and that the bloodbath, at least in its present form, might have been avoided had we stayed out. Now we can only hope for local resistance. □

Note: *To avoid any ambiguity or worse, let me make clear that the statement to which the participants in this symposium have responded was meant by its author, myself, not as an expression of personal or editorial opinion. It was meant as a summary of views now being expressed elsewhere. I am in complete agreement with Michael Walzer's answer.*

—IRVING HOWE □

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Sheila M. Rothman

Family Life as Zero-Sum Game

The first appearance of the new definition of woman was not intended to disrupt family life. The writing of Betty Friedan, the first Statement of Purpose of NOW, the findings of Masters and Johnson, and even the recipes in *The Joy of Sex* did not imagine that an active and liberated woman would war on her husband or her children. On the contrary, they all believed that woman as person would be a better wife and mother. Her energy and activity would make the home a more interesting, more exciting, and more satisfying place.

To Friedan, the ideal feminist was both a working wife and a mother. Liberated women were "not battleaxes or manhaters," and she noted with pride that "there are men in our own ranks." Indeed, Friedan's new woman would command a respect from men that her predecessors had not. "The officials were interviewed," she reported, "treated us as attractive women, but without the glint of contempt that so often belies men's flattery of women. Because we were and are serious about real equality . . . they treated us with real respect." The relevant "other" for Friedan remained the man. The goal was to gain equality with him.

So, too, Masters and Johnson translated their laboratory findings into a sex therapy program in order to enhance marital life. They offered their treatment only to couples who had agreed in advance to remain together for five years. Alex Comfort's books also insisted that a variety of techniques would help keep sexual interest alive over a long married life. In fact, married couples enjoyed the best sex: "One needs a steady basic diet of quiet, night-and-morning matrimonial intercourse. . . . The more regular sex a couple has, the higher the deliberately contrived peaks—just as the more you cook routinely, the better and the more reliable banquets you can stage." Even the unconventional section on "foursomes and moresomes" urged readers to share sex only with other couples committed to maintaining their own marriages.

But despite this initial conservatism, the women's movement was soon issuing far more radical proposals. Amazing as it may seem more than ten years later, the organizers of NOW in 1966 believed that ending sexual discrimination in the work force and establishing a national network of day-care centers would immediately accomplish the social and economic equality of American women. Their facile optimism reflected a very limited experience. And no sooner did a national organization for women come into being than their education began. NOW's existence prompted women from all over the country to recount the discriminations that they had experienced. NOW became a sounding board for grievances that went deeper than anyone had ever imagined or could even immediately

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Excerpted from Sheila M. Rothman, *Woman's Proper Place* (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1978). Copyright© 1978 by Sheila M. Rothman. Reprinted by permission.

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comprehend. Constituents, in other words, taught the NOW leaders about the real nature of women's experience in the world, and constituents then went on to radicalize the reform agenda.

Unable to anticipate the complexity of a program that would bring equality to women, NOW's first leaders were unable to control the rank and file. Once constituent pressure began to direct organizational policy, the women's movement became (and to this day has remained) essentially leaderless. Some of NOW's founders withdrew when new goals conflicted with their personal beliefs. The others who stayed, like Friedan herself, were forced to accept policies that they had never anticipated or even favored. In fact, the very passive title of Friedan's autobiography, *It Changed My Life,* is an honest indication that she was swept up in the current created by the movement—that in NOW, members directed leaders.

Through this dynamic, NOW's list of demands rapidly expanded. Within a few years it was spearheading the fight for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, leading an attack on abortion laws, organizing specific programs to equalize educational opportunities for women, demanding important changes in marriage, divorce, and rape laws, and agitating to end discrimination against lesbians. In each instance, it was constituent pressure that brought the organization into these issues.

In 1967, just one year after NOW's founding, the priority that organizers had first given to the enforcement of Title VII gave way to a commitment to pass an equal rights amendment. It was by no means a universally approved strategy. To some labor union officials, particularly the United Auto Workers (who were actually helping to pay NOW's mailing costs), an equal rights amendment would abolish special protective legislation that they, like the Progressives before them, believed to be in the best interest of blue-collar workers. For others, an equal rights amendment raised the prospects of NOW becoming identified with the National Woman's party—and they wanted to keep the new feminist organization distinct from an old, tired, and ineffectual one. But these views did not carry; pressure from NOW constituents overrode the objections. "As I listened and watched the women all over the hall who spoke," recalled Friedan, "I saw that very few were opposed to taking a stand on the ERA." The old-line National Woman's party members made a quick alliance with younger delegates. "When those very old suffragettes sitting in the front row got up to speak on the Equal Rights Amendment," continued Friedan, "I saw that they *spoke to* those very young women who had never heard of it before and were kindled by it as they had not been by narrow job issues."

And no wonder. An equal rights amendment promised in one grand sweep to eliminate not only job discrimination but *all* discrimination. The younger women in NOW had little desire for special protection. Committed to a view of woman as competent—fully capable of acting in her own best interest—they were far more comfortable with equal rights than with particular privileges. Better to have an amendment that would offer a legal basis for abolishing all forms of discrimination than to perpetuate a system that treated women as children.

NOW's decision at the same 1967 convention to campaign on behalf of abortion on demand also took the organization in a direction that its founders had not anticipated. Perhaps the social class and income of the Smith alumnae allowed them easier access to medical abortions than most women had; or perhaps it was a dirty secret that they would not share with an interviewer. But Friedan, along with other NOW officers, seemed amazed at the diverse types of women who enthusiastically advocated a liberalized abortion policy. "The women speaking up passionately for it," Friedan noted, "were not only the young women from everywhere, but the square, middle-aged housewife types from Indiana and points south." Once again, the first-hand knowledge of NOW's members, and not the ideas of its leaders, wrote the platform.

And so it was with lesbian rights. Friedan,

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always intent on keeping the organization at least within range of middle-American values, feared that the "lavender menace" would wreck NOW. Convinced that lesbians were trying to capture NOW for their own purposes Friedan did manage to force many of them out of the organization. Nevertheless, the determination of most members to speak for the rights of all women in all situations overrode Friedan's objections. Although few NOW members were homosexual (in a recent survey, 8 percent reported themselves homosexual and 9 percent bisexual), they empathized with the discriminations that these women suffered. Thus, NOW resolved at its 1971 convention that a "woman's right to her own person included the right to define and express her own sexuality and to choose her own life style; therefore, we acknowledge the oppression of lesbians as a legitimate concern of feminism."

Around the issues of equal rights, day care, abortion, and discrimination against lesbians, NOW left the precepts of educated motherhood and wife-companion for a model of woman as her own person. In a very short time, it rejected and renounced as harmful to women the social policies built on these inherited assumptions. Progressive special protection was one more form of discrimination. Even Sanger's version of "voluntary motherhood" had merely given the women the option to space their children; the feminists of the 1960s demanded that women have the freedom to choose *not* to become mothers—or even wives. The new woman reformers had a wider tolerance for various forms of sexual expression. Behavior that before had been labeled as sick or corrupting was now protected and sanctioned under a right to privacy. Only women themselves, and no one else, could define and implement their own best interest.

The adoption of these planks not only marked off the feminists of the 1960s from their predecessors but also pointed to a critical shift in the women's movement itself. NOW had begun in 1966 as a civil rights organization; by 1971, it was a women's liberation organization. This shift altered both its agenda and underlying assumptions, particularly its notion that the interests of men and women were ultimately compatible. Friedan and her allies had never thought in terms of competing interests or trade-offs. Ostensibly, programs that benefited women would benefit men. But as such issues as abortion and lesbian rights became prominent, and as the efforts to implement them began, the old view gave way. Friedan complained in 1970 that Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics,* which made sexual warfare the moving force in history, was "genuinely dangerous to the movement." Friedan was convinced that "no serious, meaningful action emerges from a sexual emphasis. There is simply talk, anger, and wallowing. It is also based on a highly distorted, oversimplified view of our society, men and women, family relations, relations to children." But Friedan notwithstanding, beginning in the 1970s a conflict model, not a consensus model, pervaded the women's movement.

The issue of liberalized abortion most dramatically revealed how competing interests affected family relationships. Abortion on demand might be in the best interest and within the rights of women, but it was not necessarily in the best interest of husbands or of society in general.

Even its most passionate supporters recognized that a pro-abortion policy did entail benefits to some at costs to others, that trade-offs were inevitably involved. If a woman had the right to abortion, did her decision require the consent of her spouse? What about those cases where the woman's desire to abort a fetus conflicted with her husband's desire to have a child? Did the fetus have rights apart from the mother's? When, if ever, did a fetus take on a life of its own—after three months? six months? only after delivery? Did society have an interest in preventing abortion? Would the right to abortion inevitably lead to infanticide for deformed babies or euthanasia for the senile? Conversely, did the poor have the same rights to abortion as they had to medical treatment?

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The federal courts resolved some of these issues, generally dismissing husbands' claims and those of the poor but disallowing all restrictions on women's prerogatives before the fetus was three months old. The very language and passion of the debate, however, illustrated all to vividly the deep character of the controversy. For the first time,it appeared that women's interests, family interests, and societal interests were in conflict.

The debate over abortion provided one context for the emergence of the children's rights movement. The doctrine of woman as person implicitly suggested that maternal roles might not be consistent with women's needs—and then the case of abortion made the conflict explicit. An early and important statement on children's rights appeared in a small book written by three psychoanalysts: Joseph Goldstein, also a professor of law at Yale, Anna Freud, director of the Hampstead Child Therapy Clinic in London, and Albert Solnit, a professor of pediatrics and psychiatry at Yale. Aptly entitled *Beyond the Best Interest of the Child*, the tract contended that the traditional notion that courts should promote the child's best interest had been a masquerade, cloaking policy decisions that were ultimately made in the parents' best interest. Just when the women's movement was asserting that the role of mother could conflict with the welfare of women, these authors were arguing that the natural mother—or, for that matter, the father—would not necessarily promote the welfare of the child. Moreover, just when the movement was insisting that women's rights should be enhanced regardless of the costs to others, these authors were insisting that children's rights should be enhanced regardless of the costs to others.

Goldstein, Freud, and Solnit argued the case in only one aspect—child custody proceedings. Previously, custody decisions had automatically favored the biological parent: the right of a mother to her child was almost always held paramount over that of foster parents and usually over that of a father. It was time, declared Goldstein and the others, to revise this policy; a genuine concern for the child should promote custody decisions that favored the "psychological" parent. Carefully avoiding the use of the term "mother," they referred only to the parent, and in their definition, the fit parent was the one who was actually satisfying the child's psychological needs. "Whether any adult becomes the psychological parent of a child," they announced, "is based on the day-to-day interaction, companionship, and shared experiences. The role can be fulfilled by a biological parent or by an adoptive parent or by any caring adult—but never by an absent, inactive adult, whatever his biological and legal relationship to the child." The critical consideration was to respect the child's attachment to his psychological parents. "An absent biological parent," the authors maintained, "will remain or tend to become a stranger."

Thus, in that terrible and tragic case when Dutch Jews returned at the end of World War II to reclaim children left for safekeeping in non-Jewish households, the children's rights doctrine would have reversed the Dutch Parliament's flat decree in favor of the biological parents and instead upheld the psychological parents. "More interests will tilt the scale toward leaving well enough alone, than allowing the biological parents to prevail." What seemed cruel and heartless from the perspective of the parent was, in fact, in the best interest of the child.

In more general terms Goldstein, Freud, and Solnit questioned earlier assumptions about the meaning of a "wanted" or "unwanted" child. As formulated by Margaret Sanger, these terms reflected the sentiments of the biological parent—if the natural mother did not want the child, the child was unwanted. But by viewing the concept from the perspective of the child, the authors could contend that a child who was unwanted by the parent might well be wanted by someone else. So in the first instance, they wanted to upgrade the prerogatives of foster parents, giving them first rights to adopt a child already in their care. They also favored speedy adoption procedures, compelling a biological parent to decide quickly on custody; and they urged that a decision once made by the

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biological parent in favor of adoption be irreversible. Nor would they allow child welfare agencies to remove a child from the psychological parent except in cases where the child's interest, and not those of the agency or of the biological parent, dictated it. Finally, they strongly advocated state adoption subsidies, so that the psychological parents would have full rights to the child without forfeiting financial compensation.

Psychoanalytic doctrines provided one foundation for the recommendations of Goldstein, Freud, and Solnit. Defining the child as one who changes "constantly, from one state of growth to another," who perceives the world in "an egocentric manner," who cannot maintain "positive emotional ties with a number of different individuals," who can "freely love more than one adult only if the individuals in question feel positively to one another," they elevated, predictably, psychological ties over biological ones. Relying also on the laboratory experiments of John Bowlby, they stressed the special nature of time to children and the detrimental consequences of prolonged separation. A six-month absence might seem short to a parent, while to a two-year-old it was interminable and had devastating effects.

But why were psychoanalytic doctrines, which for decades had been used to tighten the link between mother and child, now suddenly put into the context of children's rights? The answer rests first in the new awareness of the distinction between the interest of the biological parent and that of the child. When one could no longer assume that a woman was primarily a mother, that her needs were identical with and indistinguishable from the child's, then child advocacy took on a novel meaning. In essence, these authors were saying that if there were an adult ready and willing to care for the child, for goodness' sake, do not disturb the relationship.

If child advocates like Goldstein, Freud, and Solnit shared a sense of pessimism, others like Selma Fraiberg evinced a deep anger. Although Fraiberg agreed with Goldstein, Freud, and Solnit that social policy should favor psychological parents over biological parents in custody battles, she was much more intent on diagnosing the "diseases of non-attachment," or the ill effects on children when women go out to work and abandon the role of mother. Her book, *Every Child's Birthright: In Defense of Mothering,* was intended "for all those radicals, like myself, who think that our survival as a human community may depend as much upon our nurture of love in infancy and childhood as upon the protection of our society from external threats." And that survival, Fraiberg argued (along the lines of Bowlby) depended upon "the human qualities of enduring love and commitment to love [that] are forged during the first two years of life."

Fraiberg insisted that the child from birth to the age of three could not tolerate "the care of a succession of anonymous sitters." At the least, "parents who understand these [distress] reactions as signs of love take special pains to see that a sitter employed for the parents' night out, or the mother's afternoon away, will be a person known to the child and trusted by them and their child." From the ages of three to six, "most children can tolerate separation from the mother for a half day . . . without distress when a good and stable substitute care plan is provided." Nowhere did Fraiberg actually come out and tell women to stay at home and not go to work—but ideal substitute mothers, she noted, are not to be found; mothers of children below six could only take "an afternoon away" or "half a day away." In other words, a career choice was in basic conflict with child development. For a working woman "there are almost no good solutions open to her—at least so far—which serve the needs of her child." Either the child is neglected "and so may learn that the world outside of the home is an indifferent world, or even a hostile world," or it is passed from one sitter to another and so "may learn that all adults are interchangeable, that love is capricious, that human attachment is a perilous investment." Thus women's liberation, when examined from the perspective of the child, seemed a dangerous doctrine. If the

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woman gained independence, the child lost love and stability.

Given such disparities, it becomes less difficult to understand the steady decline in the American birth rate over the past decade. It was not merely that the technology of birth control (through the advent of the Pill) facilitated family limitation; rather, more women were reluctant to assume the responsibility for rearing several children. In the mid-1970s the birth rate reached an all-time low of 1.8 children per family (and there is every indication that the figure will not climb substantially higher in the near future). This did not mean that more women were choosing to remain childless; instead, women were postponing having children until later in life and then having fewer children than ever before. This pattern was perfectly consistent with career or job interests—with getting a start in a position, interrupting work for a brief stint at motherhood, and then returning sooner rather than later to the work force. As these figures (and Fraiberg's laments) make clear, women's decisions no longer gave mothering its traditional primacy.

By the same token, the individual needs of women no longer seemed compatible with one lifelong marital relationship. Not that women stopped or were supposed to stop marrying; although the divorce rate climbed (doubling over the past ten years), so did the number of remarriages. Rather, an expectation of impermanence now seemed normal within a marriage. If the experts of the 1920s counseled women to find fulfillment in an intensive and all-consuming intellectual and sexual relationship with one man, their counterparts in the 1970s told them that fulfillment was not a unitary, once achieved/always achieved state, that different stages demanded new relationships. In the 1950s, as in the 1920s, diamonds were "forever." In the 1970s, diamonds were "for now."

Runnig through all this literature is a contemporary definition of family life as a battleground among members, each trying to gain his or her own personal victory. It is an unusual perspective, one that is particular to our own times. For generations social critics predicted the demise of the family, but their predictions were by way of a lament, an effort to recall family members to their proper duties, to enhance maternal, paternal, and filial responsibility. Many contemporary social critics also predict the demise of the family, but they are far from certain as to how to rescue it, even whether to rescue it. A few observers like Fraiberg have attempted to revive a traditional ethic, to remind mothers that their grandmothers knew best, that folk wisdom has its strengths. But others insist upon the futility of such an endeavor; grandmothers do not set (and never really have set) the fashion. The more popular response is to take up the cause of one or another family member and set out the strategy that will most effectively realize that member's best interest. Since the family is a battleground, every member should have, and now does have, its own Clausewitz. Hence, women should anticipate divorce as a rite of passage; men should know that when they want to settle down their wives will want to climb mountains; children should understand, or at least have lawyers who understand, that their own interests will not necessarily be furthered by parental decisions.

Whatever the precise nature of the advice, one assumption is common to all of it: family life is a zero-sum game. Some interests must be sacrificed to others. What is good for wives is not necessarily good for husbands and what is good for mothers is not necessarily good for children. Where our predecessors saw harmony, we see discord. Where they saw mutuality of interest, we see conflict of interest. And as we move from the private sphere to the public, the sounds of discord grow more intense. The political arena does not take second place to the family as a battleground for competing interests. □

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Al Nash

The Local Union: Center of Life in the UAW

Despite some signs of middle-age spread, the United Automobile Workers Union, now over 40 years old, sustains a politically sophisticated response to issues while preserving much of the democratic spirit that distinguished its earlier years. The UAW still is known for being in the vanguard among unions, protecting the rights of minorities, devising new bargaining demands, and helping the cause of those that are denied justice. What is less known is the stormy life of the local unions that have institutionalized democracy and militancy in the UAW. It is the history of one such local, Local 7, I propose to relate here.

Local 7, UAW, has been the certified representative of the Chrysler Kercheval-Jefferson workers in Detroit since 1937. Along with a number of older locals, it helped found the international union. Local 7 was organized in 1936, after the merger of a federal local union, affiliated with the AFL and somewhat influenced by followers of the Communist party, with an independent union that was influenced by followers of Father Coughlin, a right-wing Catholic priest. The major leader of the local was R. J. Thomas, an electric welder later to become president of the UAW.

The merged local participated in a sit-down strike in March 1937 that resulted in recognition of the UAW by the Chrysler Corporation. This sit-down strike played a major role in the continuing militancy of the local, for it was to serve as a heroic myth used to justify appeals to strike, walk out, or slow down. For a long time, Local 7 was led by a coalition of the followers of R. J. Thomas and fellow-travelers of the Communist party and was known as "left-wing," until successfully challenged by a pro-Reuther group led by Joe Hattley, a metal-shop worker. Local 7 played an important role in the struggles within the UAW around the "no-strike pledge" of World War II, "incentive pay," representation for blacks, dues increases, longer terms of office for union leaders, and other such issues.

My connection with Local 7 began after its reputation as a militant and democratic local union had clearly emerged and the members of the Reuther group had taken over its administration. In May 1949, I went to work in the plant as an assembler on the motor line, and I was a member of Local 7 until December 1953.

It was a fortunate assignment, because an old friend and socialist colleague, Oscar Paskal, who is now on the staff of the UAW, had been working on the same motor line for over five years. He introduced me to active union members and eased my integration into the life of the shop.

My job at Chrysler consisted of tightening 16 bolts with a hand brace, turning the motor around so that it faced sideways as it was conveyed along the assembly line, and pasting on a gasket. Occasionally, as I turned a motor, it would tumble off the buck on which it was precariously perched. Workers on each side of me would dash frantically to safety. The work

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was strenuous and I soon learned to tighten only those bolts that had three or four threads showing and to ignore the rest; other workers, I found, developed similar shortcuts. There were occasional assignments that defied my skill and exceeded my strength. With Oscar's help I managed to get back to my first job and survive the three-month probationary period.

My shift began at 7:00 AM and soon the day began to drag. It was difficult to talk with other workers because of the noise and because each of us had to move in different directions. Work would sometimes be interrupted when a motor fell into the chain belt that was pulling the line and a foreman had to stop the line. These occasions would be greeted with cheers and laughter as workers relaxed or grabbed a quick smoke.

Most workers, invariably white, left the plant only when they found other jobs while on lay-off. A few obtained better jobs elsewhere or opened their own business (usually a bar or a gas station). Some became foremen. A small group of very able white local leaders found jobs with the international union or in state politics. These losses kept stripping the local of some of its best talent. On the other hand, the most talented blacks remained because, like other black workers, they were unable to find better jobs outside auto factories. Laid-off black workers always returned. Over the years, as many white workers failed to return from the frequent lay-offs, the black workers grew in numbers and accumulated seniority. In the beginning, without seniority, they were clustered on the night shift. By 1949, 75 percent of the day-shift workers and 55 percent of the night-shift workers on the motor line were white. The rest, along with a handful of Chinese and Filipinos, were black.

Many of the whites on the night shift were recent arrivals from the South. "Hillbillies" as they were called, were often the butt of jokes and, when lay-offs occurred, someone would always tie a pair of old shoes to the moving line with the printed explanation: "hill-climbing shoes for sale; Hillbilly leaving town." The Chrysler Kercheval-Jefferson plant was located in an area largely inhabited by Southern whites and was known as a "hillbilly" plant. Joe Hattley, the local union president, was a Southerner who had long established roots in Detroit; a previous president had also been from the South.

The chief steward on the day shift was Walter Paine, a good friend of Oscar's. Paine was also a friend of Jack Widick, author of several books, long a socialist, and at that time a chief steward of Local 7. In *The UAW and Walter Reuther*, written by Jack Widick and Irving Howe, Paine is described as "one of the important men" in the union. In his youth he had voted for and admired Eugene V. Debs. Paine was a devoted spokesman for the motor-line workers and played an influential role in the local; like other UAW stewards, he was "The Union" to the workers. Most rank-and-file members have little contact with higher union officials; the individual who represents them in their grievances with management, keeps them informed of union activities, and listens to their complaints *is* the union.

While Paine may have been one of the best stewards in the UAW, the powers and rights he exercised were typical of the steward system in most of the large plants represented by the UAW. Paine, like other Chrysler chief stewards, had won the right to get off the stressful and fatiguing work on the line; he spent his day enforcing the collective-bargaining agreement. The foremen frequently consulted Paine before they made any move that might cause discontent, and workers consulted him when foremen took actions they considered inimical to their interests.

The steward's office frequently attracted the most capable individual in the department. In order to be reelected, a steward had to be effective in representing the department and in dealing with rivals. Unlike other union officials, a defeated steward returns to his former job where he can function as an effective opposition informed by the sophistication and skill acquired in the office to which he hopes to return. The steward is also subject to the pressures of his constituency and his personal followers. To engage their support, he must listen to their complaints

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and act promptly on their grievances. He, in turn, is able to bring pressure on members of the local union executive board, who need the steward's support in order to stay in office or seek higher office.

In time, Paine assisted in my election to chief steward. Before that came to pass, however, Local 7, along with other Chrysler locals, called a strike that was to last 103 days, mainly over the issue of a funded pension. Because of my previous experience as a union organizer, I was able to play a useful role in the strike. Along with Oscar Paskal, Jack Widick, and others in our socialist group, I was involved in the day-to-day conduct of the strike and became friendly with night-shift motor-line workers, and also with leaders in other departments, particularly the black leaders. Hundreds of workers (our local then had 14,000 members!) came to the union hall for assistance.

At first I was surprised by the absence of a picket line in front of the plant. Strikes in New York had always called for large or aggressive picket lines to keep scabs out. Not so at Chrysler; we usually had one picket at a gate who sat in a chair. There was no fear of a back-to-work movement or of strikebreakers. Only once did we have a mass picket line in front of the plant, and that was really a morale-building parade led by Walter Reuther.

The strike in our part of the plant had begun gently. Walter Paine had formed a line of workers extending from wall to wall. Starting at the back of the huge plant we walked to the front advising workers that the strike was on. There was no need for coercion. Although we lacked a union shop and had no dues checkoff, the union was unquestionably accepted by Chrysler workers, most of whom had voted for the strike on a secret ballot. Though they supported the strike, the workers did complain about the limited assistance they received from the union and the length of the strike. The UAW did not then have its present strike fund. When Chrysler agreed to the first funded pension in the United States for unionized blue-collar workers, the strike was settled. Elections for local union officers, delayed by the strike, were then held. Notwithstanding the gains achieved, the dissatisfaction of the workers with the high cost of the strike in terms of lost wages was reflected in the defeat of every Chrysler local union administration by opposition slates. International officials were not affected.

I was elected chief steward of the night-shift motor line. To be eligible, I transferred to the night shift. I did so very reluctantly, for working "nights" meant dropping out of "circulation." I soon learned that night-shift workers generally nurse a belief that their interests are neglected: "out of sight, out of mind." The black workers on the motor-line night shift were more conscious of being a group than those on day shift and believed that union officials overlooked their interests. For example, there was not a single black worker on any of the better paid jobs even though some had the seniority for these jobs. With the help of black workers with whom I had become acquainted during the strike and with the assistance of Walter Paine on the day shift (both shifts voted for each steward) I was elected chief steward.

As chief steward, I stopped working on the line, following the example set by other chief stewards, though the agreement between union and company made no clear provision for this arrangement; but to do both, work on a job and represent workers effectively, was almost impossible. The company did not press the issue because the workers wanted to have their steward on tap for grievances and would have shut the plant down if this arrangement had been eliminated. However, every month the company sent a letter to the local complaining about the failure of chief stewards to perform their assigned company jobs, and the local's executive board regularly replied, "Your letter regarding the matter of the chief stewards has been duly noted and filed." In my own case, I had to get off the line if I was to have the time to introduce the reforms I hoped to see in my department.

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(Besides, of course, one of the pleasures of being chief steward was to get off that damned line.)

My principal concern was to make sure that whatever discrimination existed in the department was wiped out. Of all the socialist beliefs I had acquired, the one I felt most urgently was to combat racial discrimination. So I tried to make sure that black workers were more adequately represented in the union structure, and I encouraged workers in distinct sections of the department to elect their own section (or "blue-button") stewards. These stewards, whose jobs were defined in the union by-laws, had no rights under the contract and were mainly useful for bringing grievances to the attention of the chief steward and relaying information to the members. Six or seven black stewards were elected. Next, I did appoint two assistant chief stewards, one a popular black worker and the other, a white, a genuine Hatfield from West Virginia, urbane and unprejudiced toward blacks so far as I could make out. We thus accomplished representation for Southern whites, who also felt neglected by the union in the department, and representation for blacks. I also formed an educational committee and held meetings of the department, with white and black informal leaders learning to work together more easily. This two-sided approach also allayed the fear of some whites that I was too friendly with black workers, a "nigger-lover."

About 200 to 300 workers attended the weekly department meeting, held at "lunch time" in an open space in our department. I reported on grievances, occasionally called for a vote on questions affecting the department, answered questions, and scotched false rumors. The educational committee consisted of the department's most devoted union members. It met weekly to discuss department problems as well as topical and social issues. The committee played a role in integrating a rather loosely organized department and became the core of a "flying squadron" that we subsequently organized.

Other changes followed. The foreman was persuaded to let me know before "lunchtime" about overtime for the night or if we would work less than the regular eight hours. Upon receiving this information, I would write it down on a cardboard and walk around the line (it was about three city blocks long) holding the sign aloft. Conveying this information promptly allowed workers to inform their families during the lunch hour. There were variations in this method: when a world series game or championship fight was on, I would walk around announcing the results on a sign.

Improving my relations with my constituency also strengthened my ability to bargain with the people in local management who first had been alarmed when I was elected. On the night I first assumed my new duties, I was called into the office of the division superintendent and told bluntly that I "had better watch my step." I promptly relayed this to a department meeting I called later that night during our meal break. I was not bothered again.

It was easy to improve upon the collective-bargaining record of my predecessor because the workers had found him indifferent, if not hostile, to their complaints. Yet I had to prove something before the very workers who had elected me would come to me with their grievances. I had to demonstrate my competence and earn their confidence—at department meetings and in using a discreet and responsible militancy.

Shortly after I received the grievances I would bring the foreman over to the grievant and attempt to resolve the complaint promptly. If the complaint was about a working condition such as a broken drinking fountain, I always made sure the foreman came with me to look at the trouble. Occasionally, if the foreman persistently refused to cooperate, we had to exert pressure that might be something as simple as booing him.

Workers, and frequently with good reason, will suspect that there is a mercenary or ulterior move behind any significant act of a union or management official. "What's the angle?" Trust does not come easy even for a truly loyal representative: "Prove you are on our side." But, in the case of stewards, finding

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proof isn't that hard because the steward operates in an open environment where his constituents can observe him constantly, something they cannot do with higher officials in the union. This often leads to a high turnover in this position. In the absence of an entrenched bureaucracy at the local union level it is not all that hard to defeat a steward when his constituents become dissatisfied with his performance.

A steward who tries to demonstrate his devotion with a supercharged militancy will soon find that he is considered a hothead, an irresponsible radical, or an ambitious politician. Endangering jobs or pay is proof to the worker of incompetent leadership. Trust has to be won step by step, day by day. By making visible my critical attitude toward the foremen and the company in a responsible, if dramatic, way as occasion offered, I succeeded in reducing suspicion.

Even a small action can be escalated in stages. On one occasion, I donned a pith helmet to dramatize the company's continuous failure to repair a number of holes in the roof through which rain fell on the workers. When this failed to budge the company, I walked up and down the line with an umbrella pretending to shield the workers from the rain. Finally when these tactics failed to provide a solution, I discreetly encouraged the workers affected by the rain to go to the men's room in a body with a case of mass diarrhea. The roof was soon repaired. The action, mild as it was, might have led to the disciplining or discharge of a number of workers, but they followed my lead because they had come to believe that I was on the level.

The grievances or gripes I received were in many respects similar to those I received as chief steward in the aircraft plant I had worked in five years earlier. Many of the grievances in the aircraft plant were protests (or pleas) by those who had been punished for tardiness, absenteeism, drunkenness, or some other violation of company rules. Among the differences I found at Chrysler was the fact that far more workers violated company rules.

There were also more complaints about working conditions. Workers complained about broken windows, open doors that let in the winter air, the absence of fans, and the need for protective gloves. Another difference was the hostility exhibited to the work process itself. In aircraft I had rarely received a complaint about speedup or the division of work. In auto, there were constant suspicions that the pace of the line was surreptitiously increased by the foreman or that the division of work was unfair. Workers in auto were angry individuals: sullen, belligerent, quick to call on the steward for assistance. The swift pace of the line didn't permit workers to spend much time chewing the fat in the men's or women's rooms, as the arrangement of work permitted in aircraft.

As a chief steward, I felt much more helpless in negotiating with management in auto than in aircraft. The aircraft firm for which I had worked had been an independent corporation, not part of a chain corporation as was Chrysler. The ability of an auto corporation to resist walkouts and to confront the union was greater than that of the aircraft corporation and other independent corporations I had either worked for or with whom I had negotiated as a union organizer.

Yet, there were fewer problems with auto foremen than with aircraft foremen. In auto, there was one superforeman and that was the line itself. The line disciplined the worker to be back from lunch or from his break on time or to perform his portion of work. Normally the worker had little direct contact with his or her foreman. In aircraft, however, there was a pusher, a leadman, and a foreman. They constantly supervised the workers rather than the operation. There was no "iron horse" to keep the employees in line. Consequently, aircraft workers demonstrated more antagonism to their foremen than auto workers to theirs.

Negotiating with auto foremen over such matters as reducing a penalty for alleged violation of company rules, minimizing

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favoritism, transferring senior workers to days, repairing a broken window, or correcting safety hazards was comparatively simple. But when it came to troublesome issues—such as the increased speed of the line, redistribution of operations among workers on the line, moving workers to different jobs in the department and laying off employees—the foremen would argue that they were helpless, blaming the company for these actions. When these problems arose, the chief stewards were overwhelmed by the anger of workers.

In addition, the collective-bargaining agreement, which was signed in 1951 for five years, created serious morale problems among stewards and workers. While Chrysler local unions gained the check-off, union shop, and other benefits in the contract, it actually reduced the functions of the steward as well as his ability to bargain collectively. For instance, prior to the five-year agreement, chief stewards collected dues and, in the process, recruited new members and also explained to reluctant dues-payers the advantages of the union. We had to be more sensitive to the grievances and gripes of workers so that they would be more willing to pay their dues or promote the union among nonmembers. The local also had used "flying squadrons" (dedicated union members) periodically to check the workers' union cards at the plant gates. Actions of this kind encouraged a greater sense of participation in the union and reinforced a sense of rank-and-file control. With a contract that had five years to run the workers felt they had little control over speedup and other work-related issues. Why, they believed, go to union meetings or participate in the union in other ways? Passivity and resignation developed among members and local leaders.

I remember speaking on the five-year contract at the 1953 convention of the UAW urging the delegates to vote against a proposal to extend the term of office of local union officers and stewards from one year to two years—in a sense a by-product of the five-year contract. In contending that democracy in the UAW would suffer if this proposal was passed, I pointed out that the five-year agreement had reduced membership participation in the union and was another step in the direction of establishing a purely service relationship between the member and the union. The five-year contract had led, I argued, to an increase in the speed of the line so that we were all working harder in the "Big Three" than ten years earlier.

The five-year contract coincided with the growth of economic conservatism among auto workers in Detroit. Walkouts were unpopular: lost pay made it harder to meet installment payments. The workers, and particularly the stewards, feared the actions of the arbitrator who increasingly supported company penalties for the wildcat strikes or slowdowns that were quite frequent in Detroit between the end of World War II and 1951. In 1951 the arbitrator of the UAW-Chrysler collective-bargaining agreement announced "the doctrine of positive leadership," by which he meant that stewards were expected to take positive steps to discourage walkouts—or face disciplinary action. Steward and worker could not effectively oppose speedups or handle serious problems.

I would like to put my observations on work standards in proper perspective. I can only recall two walkouts in my department in five years; neither one of them related to the line or work standards. One walkout occurred over the refusal of a new worker to join the union and the other over the failure of the company to patch up the roof. While workers always exhibited distrust about the speed of the assembly line, the bulk of the grievances that were filed in my department (which had approximately 800 workers) were about matters not directly related to the line; for example, penalties for insubordination, tardiness, absenteeism. There were grievances over poor working conditions, arbitrary foremen, and the like, but relatively few about conditions associated with the assembly line itself.

The stewards, including myself, had taught workers that if they were dissatisfied with a change in a work standard, they must still do

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the job. They were told that they had the right to file grievances or demonstrate in practice that they were unable to perform the job or an added operation. As stewards we were caught in a bind: if we told the workers not to do the job, we could be penalized for violating the collective-bargaining agreement; if the workers refused to do the job, they could be penalized for insubordination. As the contract was written, and interpreted by the arbitrator, it was often useless formally to "grieve" about work standards. The steward had to advise, "obey now and grieve later." In practice it meant that the worker worked harder, became adjusted to the extra operation, and grew cynical about the possibility of modifying work standards. Of course, some stewards, including myself, would sometimes go out on a limb and encourage a carefully managed slowdown, making it appear to be the voluntary action of the workers themselves. Sometimes, where the company's action threatened the loss of a work standard that had existed for a long period, there was outright defiance, but that invited penalties and a risky situation for the steward supporting the action.

Part of the problem in resisting speedup—then as now—is that it will be introduced not on a broad front but gradually, a few jobs at a time. At our plant workers concerned each time were few in number and therefore lacked the clout to force a strong and united response, perhaps a strike.

And there were other reasons why few grievances were made against work standards. Many of the more obnoxious jobs were held by those on probation or with little seniority. Newly hired workers were fearful of "grieving." Senior workers already held the best jobs, with few more attractive ones available in the department. Some of the older workers had jobs off the line where, through banking their work, they could control their pace. Others doubled up on the job, which gave them a chance to get away for a bit and play the numbers, visit friends, or rest in the dressing room. Still others worked with unofficial quotas and, after completing their workload, could visit a certain men's room where dice and other games of chance were accessible. And some workers developed short cuts or great facility in handling their operations, which allowed them some freedom to relax.

Many workers were able to develop a degree of autonomy in their jobs. Given the presence of a vigorous union and a belligerent work force, management could not easily press the workers into harness. The militant traditions of Local 7 undoubtedly permitted the workers to try their own experiments at job redesign as well as individual and group bargaining. Yet, union officials, including socialists like myself, had little latitude in dealing with speedups and other problems relating to work standards.

The area in which I could develop some latitude was in confronting discrimination against blacks. I recall one day when the general foreman called me over and informed me that a black worker who had the necessary seniority had applied for a repair job that paid 10¢ more an hour. However, I was informed, the other repairman on the job who was white (and from the South) said he would refuse to work with him. I already knew that the black worker would bid for the job and had assured him the union would certainly support his bid. The foreman asked me what he should do. I answered: "What do you generally do when a worker is insubordinate?" The black worker got the job. There was no outcry from the white workers; nor were there any other protests when black workers exercised their seniority rights.

The lesson was simple enough: if someone in authority who was respected and had the support of his constituents acted firmly against discrimination he faced little resistance. To be sure, a firm position wasn't always enough. In the five years I worked at Chrysler, there was only one black worker in skilled trades. The skilled tradesmen were very influential in the local and were united in their determination to keep blacks out, while the black workers were not adequately organized to break down the barriers.

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Black women, after first being hired during World War II and periods of labor shortages, were not hired in the plant, although white women were. My department was located near the employment office, and day in and day out I could see that there were no black women among the new employees led through my department by a management official.

A third area of discrimination existed in the bars and grills of Detroit. Ted Morgan, a black and a chief steward in the paint department (later to become Commissioner of Sanitation in Detroit), once went with me to a soda fountain and ordered a coke. We were never served, even after we called the police and requested that a local ordinance prohibiting such discrimination be enforced.

The most glaring example of discrimination was exercised in a bar directly across the street from one of the plant entrances where on payday white workers drank beer and cashed their checks. The barrier came tumbling down when the black workers organized their first caucus and spoke plainly to both "tickets" running for office in the union election. Jesse Cundiff, the shop committeeman from my division, whom a number of us were supporting for president, went with a delegation to the offending bar and told the owner that the union would order a boycott if he didn't permit black workers the same rights as whites. The owner capitulated.

The organization of the "black caucus" was the first truly significant step blacks in Local 7 took *as blacks*. The group demanded that one of the candidates for an officer's job on the Cundiff ticket be a black. I remember a discussion at a meeting at the Cundiff caucus where the matter first came up. The standard argument advanced against the demand was that it was discrimination in reverse and that election to office should be based on merit. I took the floor at the meeting and said, in effect, that it was strange that when we had put a ticket together in the past, we always made sure that the ticket was balanced with an Italian, a Pole, a Southerner, etc., but when it came to blacks we suddenly talked of merit. I was supported by Jack Widick and others, and for the first time a black officer was nominated and ultimately elected—Ted Morgan, as recording secretary.

Yet, the black caucus was unstable. Rivalries for office, petty jealousies, and alliances with powerful white politicians often split the black caucus and reduced its effectiveness. Nevertheless, at the next election, a black (Ted Griffin) was elected to the vice-presidency of the local. In my department, we elected Ollie Foster and Bob Walker, both black, to chief stewardships. They were the first black chief stewards in the Motor Line Department.

I had run for chief steward on the day shift to replace Walter Paine, who was elected shop committeeman for the Machine Shop Division in the same election. By this time I was fairly well-known in the local union and, along with Jack Widick and other members of the Independent Socialist League (ISL), helped elect at least three different slates of candidates to local union office. Although members of the three slates had participated in the Reuther caucus of Local 7, their ambitions, supported by discontented workers, led to strife and to the disintegration of each slate. Aside from the defeat of one administration resulting from the dissatisfaction of workers with the 103-day strike in 1950, other administrations were turned out of office because of problems associated with the company's efforts to increase the speed of the line.

The company was persistent, first attacking time-honored work standards in one department and then subverting the work standards in another, constantly probing for weak areas of resistance. Workers would be sent home or otherwise disciplined for not meeting the workloads assigned to them. Workers occasionally reacted by walking off the job, alienating workers in other departments because the walkout stopped the movement of parts to their department and the line was consequently halted. Local union leaders found themselves unable to cope with the company's tactics, although they resisted with all the tricks they could muster. In the end, workers would conclude that the officers were incompetent or in league with the company

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and would vote to elect new officers who then were faced with a similar cycle.

Members of the ISL, as I have indicated, were active in the various struggles with the company and in the union. Unlike unionists who were at that time also members of the Socialist Workers party or of the Communist party, the ISL members in the union movement, including those at Chrysler, did not act as a faction, tightly disciplined, expressing a party line. About 11 ISLers worked in Chrylser at one time or another, and each pursued his own trade-union line, which usually was determined by his socialist principles and his place in the social structure of the plant and the union.

In practice, applying socialist principles meant demanding bolder union policies, attempting to modify management's prerogatives, and struggling for a fairer grievance procedure more sensitive to the interests of workers. This involved fighting for the abolition of discrimination in all departments including skilled trades, requiring equality between male and female workers, reducing the wage gap between skilled and unskilled workers, proposing a mutual agreement between the union and management on the speed of the line, and opting for measures to deepen union democracy.

Firm commitment to these values enabled each ISLer to devote more energy and time to union activities than did the average union official. Nor were the ISLers susceptible to union or management blandishments. Each of them interpreted his socialist principles in terms of his own personality and priorities. Intense and frequent discussion, along with the friendships we had developed over the years, made for a fairly homogeneous outlook among ISLers. Our differences reflected our separate locations in the social structure of the plant and the union. The chief stewards among us were influenced by the interests and problems of our constituents. Some of us found ourselves in different divisions, which made for different allies. Those of us who held no elected office in the union would sometimes take a bolder position, if not a more sectarian one.

Did we feel ourselves to be outsiders in the shop because of our political beliefs? It depends upon the meaning of "outsiders." If it implies that we were alien to the work situation, and that the policies we followed were dictated by outsiders, then, no, we were not at all "outsiders." Each of us was intimately affected by the harsh constraints present in the shop and reacted in much the same way as our fellow workers. If the question suggests that we were *sociological* outsiders, then it is valid. We were insiders to the extent that as part of a socialist network we were far better informed than other workers about events in the shop, the local and the international union. We were outsiders to the extent that we were more "detached" than other workers in our observations about the plant and the union, for we were guided by a broader view of plant and union and by a fairly sophisticated background. In a sense, we were more committed to the rank and file than the ordinary steward, and also more careful about what we did in the plant, because we had to answer to two constituencies: the workers on the job and our colleagues in the ISL who were quick to locate signs of opportunism or adventurism. All this made us more cautious and thoughtful about the kind of policies we pursued.

Given our political commitment, what did we accomplish? We were able to speed the process of integration by aiding whites to understand the harmful and immoral meaning of segregation, by helping blacks to become leaders, by persuading rank-and-file blacks to become active in the union, and by using political means to pressure local union leaders to recognize the rights of black members. Articulate at union meetings and in the plant, and at UAW conventions, we served to make the union more democratic. Indeed, some key figures in the union were influenced in their ideas and behavior by our work. Some members of the ISL in Chrylser

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and other plants became members of the international union's staff.

We failed mainly in building the ISL itself and in expressing major socialist ideas. We did not recruit a single Chrysler worker to the ISL. We rarely ever indicated, even to those closest to us in the plant or union, that we were socialists. We were fearful of appearing to hold views that were radically different from those of the constituencies we represented or sought to represent. In a sense, we became prisoners of the social milieu we sought to change. We could only influence workers to the extent that we did not express socialist views on war, capitalism, peace, and other questions. Our major failure was, then, the inability to create a socialist consciousness among activists in the union, a task much beyond our limited forces.

At the time, McCarthyism was at its height and the ISL was on the Attorney General's subversive list. (The ISL challenged the listing, with Joseph Rauh as attorney, and eventually won its case.) For example, a resolution was passed in Local 7, with the support of leading local officials, to deny any office, including that of a steward, to anyone who was a member of an organization on the Attorney General's list. We brought this resolution to the attention of the international union, which quietly persuaded the local leadership to drop it.

But we were not always this fortunate with the international on other questions. In 1951 I was elected on a ticket that was committed to fight a proposed dues increase at the convention that year. Max Shachtman, as a leader of the ISL, had strongly advised against challenging the international on a matter of this kind. I did not take his advice. Like most leaders of auto locals in Detroit, I was firmly opposed to the dues increase.

By chance, I met Walter Reuther one evening at the convention hotel. Without mincing words he told me what he thought of my opposition to the dues increase. He assumed it was the position of the ISL and expressed some hostility to the organization. I assured him that the ISL had no position on this question, and we left it at that. Later that evening, as I reflected on Reuther's concern for the dues increase, I decided to retreat. Actually, as I discovered later, the members of the Local 7 delegation also wanted to retreat, but no one would take the lead out of fear that it would be used against him back in the local. So we all voted against the dues increase but, instead of carrying on a vigorous campaign to enlist the support of other delegations, we opposed it perfunctorily.

On another occasion Reuther was kinder to me. I attended a Reuther caucus meeting at the Dairymen's Local Hall in Detroit where Reuther was the main speaker. He had completed his remarks and asked if there were any comments or questions. I raised my hand and he invited me to speak from the podium. In my comment I acknowledged that the UAW was bigger than ever, had more buildings, had more money in the treasury, and so forth. But I said this was also true of the German Social Democrats just before they were destroyed by Hitler. What was important, I concluded, was the need to follow a program in the plant more directly designed to enlist the support of the rank-and-file member. Reuther, who stood directly in back of me as I spoke kept whispering to me "but I agree with you, Brother Nash." And, indeed, when he responded to my remarks he acknowledged the usefulness of some of my observations. Many years later, I discussed this caucus meeting with Jack Widick, who had been present. We asked ourselves: in what other international union could we have received this kind of hearing for our views by international union leaders?

Jack Widick and I used to carry on our discussions in an abandoned room in the plant known to only a few individuals. There we would review the political scene in the local and relax from our obligations as stewards. We needed that relaxation. Because of their close proximity to their stewards, auto workers were able to exert great pressure on many stewards, and certainly on stewards like Jack and myself who wanted to be especially responsive. Psychologically this was extreme-

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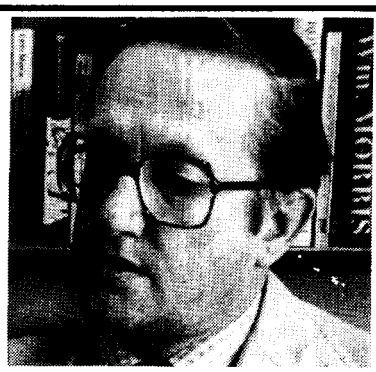

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ly tiring, though not as tiring as working on the line. Many a day, Jack and I would leave the factory feeling that we had just stepped out of a pressure cooker, and we would stop at a cheap restaurant for a pot of tea—to let off our own steam.

Our daily experiences in the shop persuaded us that a local union—let alone a chief steward—could no longer cope adequately with the problems created by the assembly line. At the factory level it was quite clear to us that we were faced with a task equal to cleaning the Augean stables—and we were not Herculean figures. We recognized that the problem of the assembly line was one that was complex and required a willingness as well as an ability by the international union to challenge the structure of work in modern society—a huge task its leaders were not about to undertake given the political structure, economic conditions, and conservative mood of the workers.

In Local 7, Jack and I found ourselves in a quandary. We had played a role in electing several individuals who became presidents of Local 7. Yet, in each case the issues in the local led to splits with each of the individuals involved. Now we were considering founding a new faction with others in the local of whom we had been critical in the past. We had considerable influence but what could we *do* with our influence? We were convinced that local union leaders had to work within a narrow framework and could only wrestle with petty plant problems; the major ones could only be settled elsewhere, if at all.

During this period Chrysler opened a new plant in Trenton, Michigan, and transferred to it 90 or 100 motor-line workers. It became increasingly clear that the motor line in the Kercheval-Jefferson plant would soon be shut down and the rest of the motor-line workers would also be moved to Trenton. By coincidence, an old friend, Gabe DeAngelis, then assistant director of UAW Region 9, wrote to me and informed me that he hoped to create a new amalgamated local in New Jersey and that I could be helpful in establishing it if I came back East. It wasn't long before I did. □

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Ronald Aronson

Is Busing the Real Issue?

The struggle over busing has become almost as familiar a feature of our social landscape as was the Vietnam war in the late 1960s or the civil rights movement a bit earlier. But there are significant differences. One is that the civil rights and antiwar movements began at the grass roots, and the masses of people involved framed the issues themselves; in fact, the busing struggle arises on the ruins of the black movement of the 1960s. Busing is not carried out to meet the demands of a mass movement. It is, rather, imposed by the courts at the behest of such organizations as the NAACP. If masses of people become involved in the dispute over busing it is later, only after school districts carry it out in keeping with court orders.

In Boston, for example, the battle lines of the 1950s and 1960s Southern struggles were grudgingly recreated. Liberals, radicals, and blacks demonstrated against conservatives, reactionaries, and racists. Black schoolchildren, seeking only an equal education, were violently attacked by whites who sought to protect their local schools from the black influx. "We hate Niggers" was shouted and scrawled, and fair-minded whites came marching to the defense of their black brothers and sisters. Although very few of these children or their families seemed to actually *want* busing, once the battle lines were drawn by the courts and the school boards they responded in predictable, and understandable, ways.

A number of people have pointed out an absurdity in the whole business: blacks and working-class Irish fought over the crumbs of education available to their children while the children of the privileged attended classes as usual over in Wellesley (Judge Garrity's home) or a dozen other well-to-do suburbs, or at excellent prep schools. Such an argument, of course, will not motivate courts. What has motivated at least a handful of district court judges is the existence of schools racially segregated according to municipal boundaries. Ordering cross-district busing, they sought to reach into the suburban white refuges to equalize their educational systems with those of predominantly black inner-city schools. The Nixon court overruled their request for metropolitan busing on the grounds that (so far) the intent to discriminate has not been proven in the original establishment of these suburban boundaries. With eventual changes in the composition of the Court, many liberals and radicals hope that the broader solution will prevail.

Solution to what? There is, in the busing controversy, an almost imperceptible mixing and confusing of purposes. At first blush those in favor of busing are committed, as Marvin Caplan has recently put it in *Dissent*, "to an integrated society and to the schools as a principal instrument for integration. . . ."[1] The main meaning of integration is black-white equality. But what does it mean that equal *education* has become a central battleground to achieve this equality? And why have the courts been so much in the forefront of the battle?

The problem is that blacks are relatively

For Notes to this article, see pp. 419-20.

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poorer than whites. Millions of black families live in hereditary poverty. But as conceptualized for them by the NAACP and the courts, the issue is not their poverty, but the *educational future* of children from these families. Why isn't the issue seen as equal housing or equal pay? Why not guaranteed employment? Why subject children, rather than their parents, to these enormous pressures and expectations?

Such specific ways of framing social issues as demanding busing arise neither mysteriously nor accidentally. We may ask why the social apparatus has decided to focus on equalizing educational opportunities as a major way of combating the inequality in America today. This choice, and the struggle following from it, can be studied in order to illuminate American society today. What, after all, is being said about us, to us, and by us, as we fight over busing?

To bus black and white schoolchildren from one district to another is a mystified answer to a mystified question. I use this irritating term to emphasize that busing leads us away from more basic social problems and pits us against each other in a fight over ideologically derived issues. The mystified question is: how do we provide all children with an equal opportunity in the struggle for a decent living? This question transforms and renders palatable the more telling one: why do whole classes and races of Americans remain poor, generation after generation? And why does anyone need to be poor in this land of abundance and even extravagance? These questions, which point us toward basic structures of American society, are replaced by one that points us toward—the poor themselves, or indeed their children. Not the society's but its victims' limitations become the issue, even for well-intentioned liberals and radicals. Our goal becomes to improve their competitive position in the great social race.

But the real issue lies elsewhere: with the assumption that social life is and should resemble a race. Most liberals as well as conservatives agree that a major goal of social life is to "get ahead." Reform thus comes to mean ensuring that the race is being run fairly and that those who finish first genuinely deserve to, as do those who finish last. For everyone to have an "equal chance" means uplifting those who normally start in a disadvantaged position, perhaps giving them a head start. Reformers also generally want to make the race less harsh and to guarantee a minimal living to the losers.

Questioning busing thus leads us to ask about core assumptions in our social life. I will seek here to criticize the assumptions behind busing, because they have had a decisive and deforming effect on our politics.

The intensely American—and fundamentally bourgeois—notion of equality of opportunity has always been confusing because on the one hand it proclaims us all equal and possessed of equal rights and dignity, but on the other hand proclaims that some of us are better and worse than others among us, and deserve to live and exercise power accordingly. Jefferson, for example, shifts effortlessly from his pride in the new society in which men govern themselves, and his belief that all people should be treated equally by their government, to his conviction that there are "natural" social and intellectual superiors and inferiors and that permitting them to find their appropriate place is one of the new society's major goals.[2] A goal achieved? Writing in the 1950s, David Potter argued both that America has "practiced a full measure of mobility and social equality,"[3] and has remained a class society since its inception. This need not confuse us: "equality has come to mean, in a major sense, parity in competition."[4] We are, or should be, *equal to become unequal.*

Equal opportunity is our—and Jefferson's—social ideal: that American society will rank and reward us according to our talents and enterprise. What has changed over 200 years is not this value, but our conception of what our society owes us as we engage in this competition. Especially since the 1930s society has taken responsibility for some

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minimal things, such as a small old-age pension, some buffers between ourselves and starvation and, most recently, minimal medical care. But certainly not guaranteed work at decent wages.

We have developed in the United States no significant ideological alternative to equal opportunity through which to think about such proposals. If guaranteed employment —not to mention redistributing wealth—goes against the American grain, proposals to allow people the chance to advance individually remain strictly in keeping with it. Which helps to explain why education has remained so important throughout American history, and has recently become a central arena of social struggle. It is supposed to prepare us for our life's competition, and to neutralize our inherited inequalities. An unequal education perpetuates built-in racial, social, class, or ethnic privileges. Such favoritism can never be the goal of a public school system in a society committed to equality of opportunity.

In 1954 the Supreme Court turned to what Potter called the "conspicuous exceptions" to our national pattern of mobility and, appropriately, insisted on granting them equal educational opportunity. "In these days," the Court reasoned in *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education* (I, 1954), "it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms."[5] Since segregation deprives minority children of equal educational opportunities the Court ordered integration.

The image of a foot race best captures the social ideal aimed at by the Court—and by most reformers. Insofar as the society and its agencies are involved, a rigorous equality of distance, equipment, rules of conduct, and available training should apply to all contestants. This will permit the appropriate inequalities of preparation, conditioning, speed, endurance, and incentive to manifest themselves. Official American society must make the contest fair by giving everyone an equal chance to develop the necessary competitive skills, to neutralize as far as possible inequalities deriving from varying family and socioeconomic backgrounds.

But how ideological it all is, seeing the question of living decently through the lenses of the great social race! And how ideological for any group to hope to end its poverty by forcing its children to uplift themselves. How ideological, then, to fight over busing.

John Schaar, spelling out some of this ideology's social meanings, emphasizes its roots in a society where individualism "is the reigning ethical principle." Extending the mentality of the marketplace to all spheres of life, it sees "the whole of human relations as a contest in which each man competes with his fellows for scarce goods, a contest in which there is never enough for everybody and where one man's gain is usually another man's loss."[6] It seductively rests on the urge to allow everyone to improve their conditions, but it insists that they do so *by themselves.*

Thus, equal opportunity is the perfect reform principle for confining all thought and action firmly within the assumptions of capitalist society:

> It breaks up solidaristic opposition to existing conditions of inequality by holding out to the ablest and most ambitious members of the disadvantaged groups the enticing prospect of rising from their lowly state into a more prosperous condition. The rules of the game remain the same: The fundamental character of the social-economic system is unaltered. All that happens is that individuals are given the chance to struggle up the social ladder, change their position on it, and step on the fingers of those beneath them.[7]

Compare the demand for equal opportunity as embodied in the struggle over busing to demanding, say, guaranteed employment for all at a minimum wage of $6.00 per hour. This demand, which on the face of it is not very radical, says very different things than the demand for "a chance." It assumes a change in our sense of our own rights—from having the right to "a chance" to having the right to a decent living. The first demand, asking simply for the freedom to make our own way, fortifies dominant institutions and attitudes,

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because "it offers *everyone* a fair and equal chance to find a place within that order."[8] The demand for a decent living for all flows from a different way of seeing social reality.

When we confront the social problem of black poverty, then, busing appears as a natural solution because it is so much in keeping with our own core assumptions. Thus we allow the courts to quite "naturally" impose it on us—whether it can work or not, whether it destroys neighborhoods or not, whether it ruins traditional institutions such as the neighborhood school or not, whether the black families involved want it or not. If no social wealth can be pried loose—or even demanded—to eliminate hereditary black poverty, then at least the courts will place black children next to whites in the skill-developing institutions that prepare people for the great social race.

If the issue of busing is thus ideologically derived, it functions to distorts reality. It creates a series of distortions that proceed from, express, and above all protect key institutions. Most mystified are those who accept the ideology most fully, oppose busing and indeed most reforms: they believe the race is being run fairly already. They fail to notice that *the big stakes have been removed from competition by the hereditary rich before the race is ever run.* And they likewise don't see that everyone else's rewards have little to do with their social contributions.

If they insist on how many Americans have been able to climb "the ladder" they ignore what it means to say that our society resembles a ladder. To loudly trumpet the fact that—because of unique historical circumstances, social conditions, mass struggle, or personal energy—some Americans "better themselves" is to overlook that, by and large, there is a largely hereditary class commanding the economy, a largely hereditary proletariat, and a largely hereditary class of the underemployed poor. The vision of "making it" places superhuman demands—and responsibilities—on the poor, because no fair race is possible where the competitors do not begin as equals.

By dreaming of their opportunities, or thinking about those few who actually do "make it," those who are fated for the lower rungs manage to see their lot in ways that protect, rather than indict, our peculiar class society. Lipset and Bendix have documented that "two-thirds of the manual workers interviewed in the Oakland labor-mobility study had thought of going into business for themselves, and over two-fifths of them had actually made efforts to start their own firm."[9] This study indicates that there is considerable interchange between small businessmen and workers: the dream of success and independence lures between 20 percent and 30 percent of these workers into trying their hand at business; the perils of small business send the great majority back to manual labor. Certainly, a few "make it." But most simply cannot and will not. They delude themselves to think otherwise.

Lost in a different kind of distortion are those who understand that the race is fixed, but believe that reforms can force it to be run fairly. Those who pin their hopes on the schools fail to see that no amount or quality of schooling can undo the pervasive effect of class, sex, and racial upbringing. Reformers committed to the values and structures of American capitalism, yet determined to root out its inherent unfairness, would be driven to advocate bizarre solutions—abolishing inheritance, perhaps, or the family. For they are trying to square the circle.

After all, we need only to look at the inconclusive results of using the schools to equalize opportunity. In those cases where schools are used to equalize, according to the study led by Christopher Jencks, they perform this function hardly at all:

> None of the evidence we have reviewed suggests that school reform can be expected to bring about significant social changes outside the schools. More specifically, the evidence suggests that equalizing educational opportunity would do very little to make adults more equal. If all elementary schools were equally

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effective, cognitive inequality among sixth-graders would decline less than 3 percent. If all high schools were equally effective, cognitive inequality among twelfth-graders would hardly decline at all, and disparities in their eventual attainment would decline less than 1 percent. Eliminating all economic and academic obstacles to college attendance might somewhat reduce disparities in educational attainment, but the change would not be large. Furthermore, the experience of the past 25 years suggests that even fairly substantial reductions in the range of educational attainments do not appreciably reduce economic inequality among adults.[10]

It is simply daydreaming to hope that equalizing educational opportunity among children can undo the natural and normal effects of a social system. Whatever else it may do, putting black boys and girls on a bus and sending them to a white school does not seem likely materially to improve their chances in life as well as those of the white children they sit next to in class.[11]

There is a third level of distortion, which takes in all of the above and more—all those who, however reluctantly, accept the notion of a race as an indelible given of social life. They fail to see how their way of seeing inflates one aspect of social life, the competitive, while hiding another, the cooperative.

Do people really seek to struggle with each other for survival? Whatever we may speculate about "human nature" in the abstract, the particular race most people run to stay alive and live decently is imposed by specific socioeconomic structures. Capitalist society organizes the cooperation necessary to our common survival through forms that distort this cooperation and separate us from each other. Because General Motors in some way competes with Ford we are taught that the GM assembler, draftsman, secretary are in some sense naturally competitive with each other or their counterparts. Our need to believe this—and thus to justify our society and the way we must live in it—gives the argument a power that its logic alone would not warrant. Furthermore, most people do not actually engage in a race to get ahead of others: their struggle is to survive decently, not to triumph over others. If social rules hinge our survival on competition, then of course we must compete. But most people simply try to live as best they can, and could live quite well in a fundamentally non-competitive world.

We focus on education—and busing—and avoid the real issues; we focus on busing *in order to avoid* the real issues. To be sure, a number of factors confuse matters for us. Segregation is a social evil no matter what, because it implies a better and a worse race and perpetuates the domination of one over the other. It should be abolished no matter what. Second, children from poor families do tend to lack the skills needed to become fully functioning members of a complex industrial society—it makes human and social sense to talk of mobilizing all necessary social energies to enable them to develop such skills. Furthermore, other factors have always encouraged Americans to believe in individual advancement as a social solution: America's legendary opportunities as a newly settled land, its lack of visible badges of class, its democratic ethos and institutions, its vast economic, social, and political differences from the old country.

The social order has been sufficiently responsive, so that most Americans have been able to ignore the cumulative indictment of our society's negative features. Without ideological and political alternatives, those who do not "make it" can only see their failure through the available lenses. Thus they blame themselves, erasing the parts of American reality that do not fit the ideology. To be a loser is to validate that we did not have what it takes to be a winner. Only a people that already sees itself as deserving poverty until it "betters" itself would accept poor housing, unemployment, and subhuman wages as its due and fight primarily for better education for its children. Theirs is a tragic evasion, accelerating the destruction of neighborhoods

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and the apartheidization of America, polarizing the have-nots against each other and placing shamefully great burdens on all our children. Reformers hooked on "equalizing" people's competitive position fail to see how much human damage can be done by humiliating the "inferiors" and reinforcing in the "superiors" a daily lesson in unconscious brutality.[12] In the end this will only accomplish the conservatives' goal: to convince everyone that they have wound up at their appropriate station in life.

Think for a moment of an integrated education in a setting where poverty has suddenly been abolished by guaranteeing work for all at a very high minimum wage. Imagine children of different classes and races learning together where rising out of their parents' poverty was not the primary reason for the poorer children being there. In such a situation, genuine social interaction between races and classes could be a rich and humanizing experience for all.

In an authentic mixing of classes and races all children could be respected equally—their growth as people, not their performance, could be the main concern, and new standards of success and failure could be developed. But this can happen only if the schools can free themselves from their externally imposed task of solving the society's social and economic problems. Only then can the schools, and our society, struggle to leave behind the ideological presumption of better and worse, and to abandon the deep commitment to inequality that lies behind the ideology of equal opportunity.

But what is the *practical* alternative? Certainly not to stand above the struggles of blacks and other minorities to improve their position in American society. Still, our inability to conjure up the movement we would like to see, to have it raise demands running counter to capitalist priorities and ideology is no warrant for abandoning an independent outlook. We certainly do not favor busing on principle. We can hardly support it when local blacks oppose it, or when it destroys neighborhoods. When we cannot avoid supporting busing—as one of the few crumbs made available to minority children—neither should we cease being critical of its assumptions and intentions. Liberals have their own agenda: it is not ours. We seek to throw into question many of their most cherished principles and solutions. If we support basic human rights, even as distorted and turned back on themselves by bourgeois ideology, we also seek to assert those rights as they might be met free from mystification, in a socialist society.

It is an old problem for socialists, being both principled and realistic. On the one hand, we seek to avoid taking flight into a sphere of sectarian and doctrinaire theorizing that preserves its adherence to principle by refusing to be involved in the real world; on the other, we seek to avoid cynically immersing ourselves in that real world and losing our hope for any alternative. For us, today, the goal can be to keep alive the tension between socialist principle and acting in the real world, to explore and reassert our commitments even as we struggle on behalf of immediate goals that may nearly deny them.

Notes

[1]Marvin Caplan, "Truth—and Shame—about Busing," *Dissent,* Fall 1976, p. 383.

[2]See *Thomas Jefferson on Democracy*, Saul K. Padover, ed. (New York: New American Library, 1939 [paper]), pp. 82, 92, 97.

[3]David M. Potter, *People of Plenty: Economic Abundance and the American Character* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), p. 97.

[4]*Ibid.*, p. 92.

[5]*The Great School Bus Controversy*, Nicolaus Mills, ed. (New York: Teachers' College Press, 1973), p. 41.

[6]John Schaar, "Equal Opportunity, and Beyond," *Equality,* J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman, eds. (New York: Atherton Press, 1967), p. 237.

[7]*Ibid.*

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[8]*Ibid,* pp. 230-31.

[9]Seymour Martin Lipset and Reinhard Bendix, *Social Mobility in Industrial Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963), p. 25.

[10]Christopher Jencks, et al., *Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973 [paper]), p. 255.

[11]To be sure, a great controversy exists on this point. As yet there seems to be no definitive evidence on the academic effects of busing; and claims are unwarranted that busing for integration makes a significant difference in minority students' achievement level. See David J. Armor, "The Evidence on Busing," Thomas Pettigrew, et al., "Busing: A Review of 'the Evidence.'" David J. Armor, "The Double Double Standard: A Reply," all in *The Great School Bus Controversy.*

[12]See, for example, the account of the classroom discussion of white and black children's Christmas vacation plans in Charles Hamilton, "The Nationalist vs. the Integrationist," *Ibid.* □

The Communists and the Argentine Junta

One of the most disconcerting phenomena about the Argentine regime is the "critical support" that the Argentinian Communist party finds it politically expedient to offer it. We know that the U.S.S.R. and Cuba twice opposed condemnation of the Junta at the United Nations. But one cannot read without amazement the words of Roberto Vallarino, *a responsible leader of the Argentine CP and a member of its Central Committee, spoken in an interview with* Bernard-Henri Lévy. *Here are his words, accurately reported. In reading them do not forget that, nonetheless, hundreds of Communists have been arrested because they are Communists.**

L: How do you estimate the relation of forces within the army?

V: Summarily, I would say that on the one hand there are Pinochetist elements, ultrareactionary; on the other hand, progressive elements of a democratic tendency.

L: Who are the progressive elements?

V: If you want names, I'd say Videla [the president], Massera, Agosti, Suarez Mason, for example.

L: In other words, the whole ruling apparatus of the Junta?

V: In a sense, yes, but I specify that it's a matter of progressive elements and tendencies.

L: Just the same, that means that, in tendency, the present government of Argentina is a progressive government?

V: It's a government containing progressive elements that, in fact, are predominant at the moment.

L: So you support the Junta?

V: Not exactly. Let's say, rather, I give it critical support.

L: According to you, then, the equation: Videla=fascism is an error.

V: A classical adventurist error that can only lead the Argentinian people further on the path of regression.

L: Regression in relation to what?

V: In relation to recent gains of the workers' and democratic movement.

L: For example?

V: Well, for instance, the fact that the Argentina of today agrees to have commercial relations with all countries.

L: So progressive means having trade relations with the U.S.S.R.?

V: Under the circumstances, it means to think of relations between states as being based on the principles of peaceful coexistence.

L: And the violation of human rights doesn't bother you?

V: Yes, of course. We ourselves have 71 militants who have disappeared.

L: Out of a total of at least 15,000, according to Amnesty International . . .

V: That figure is exaggerated and doesn't correspond to the reality. Besides, on this matter of human rights one must also take care to trace lines of demarcation. There's a rightist way of handling the question and a leftist way.

L: When the U.S.S.R. opposes any condemnation of Argentina at the United Nations is that a leftist attitude?

V: Of course. Because the inverse position would lead to isolating our people and reinforcing the Pinochet clan. 120

L: Remind me who makes up this so-called Pinochet clan.

L: Mr. Vallerino then followed up by reciting for me a list of totally unknown names. □

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Social Research and Social Reality

I: Paul Blumberg

Unless quantitative social research is tempered with common sense, it may obscure rather than illuminate social reality, which accounts for its oft-deserved reputation for sheer irrelevance. Unfortunately, the recent article by James Wright and Richard Hamilton ("Blue Collars, Cap and Gown," Spring 1978) is a model of how social researchers, using the tools of the trade, can create their own strange little world separate from the one most of us inhabit.

Browsing around in the University of Michigan's well-known Quality of Employment Survey, a comprehensive study of job satisfaction, Wright and Hamilton chanced upon one unusual statistic: manual workers who had been to college seemed to have about as high levels of job satisfaction (46 percent "very satisfied") as manual workers who had not been to college (47 percent "very satisfied"). On this slender foundation, Wright and Hamilton constructed their case. To them, this finding suggested that people who have more education than their jobs require (e.g., college-educated manual workers) are just as content as the rest of us, and thus all the recent discussion about the alienated labor of college graduates working at menial jobs, with all its potential for personal disillusionment and political radicalization, simply has no basis in actual fact. But the implications of this argument are extremely bizarre, for Wright and Hamilton are essentially saying that people who spend eight hours a day working at jobs that are beneath both their aspirations and their abilities are perfectly happy about it. The authors reached this absurd conclusion for three reasons: first, they ignored all the evidence that contradicts their thesis; second, they neglected the relevant social and political events of our time; third, they misinterpreted their own data.

Wright and Hamilton's argument is curious, first, because it runs counter to everything we know about the experience of educated workers in routine jobs. James O'Toole, senior author of HEW's well-known study, *Work in America*, writes:

> What is clear from almost every study of job dissatisfaction is that the placing of intelligent and/or highly qualified workers in dull and unchallenging jobs is a prescription for pathology– for the worker, the employer, and the society.[1]

Remarkably, Wright and Hamilton ignore the most reknowned work on the subject, *Education and Jobs: the Great Training Robbery*, in which Ivar Berg, surveying the major studies, found that workers who are educationally overqualified for their jobs tend, in fact, to be *less* satisfied than others. Specifically, Berg discovered that workers who were underutilized on the job are likely to be less satisfied with their pay, less satisfied with their promotions, more critical of management; are likely to have higher turnover rates, and lower self-esteem and "life satisfaction" scores than workers who are not underemployed.

Later studies, including others at the University of Michigan, consistently show that workers who have more education than their jobs demand are far more likely than others to suffer from a number of conditions associated with job strain and poor mental health, including overall job dissatisfaction, low job involvement, dissatisfaction with pay, with general working conditions, with the challenge of the job, with co-worker relations, other job-related tensions, low self-esteem, depression, and dissatisfaction with life in general.[2]

Wright and Hamilton dismiss the thesis that underemployed college graduates may become radicalized by their employment experience. But here they overlook the fact that the job crisis for

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university graduates has already become an explosive issue in contemporary European student movements, especially in France, Italy, and West Germany. In a perceptive essay on the roots of the 1968 French student revolt, sociologist Raymond Boudon notes that, in a survey of university students taken by the French Institute of Public Opinion shortly after the May-June events, 56 percent of the students interviewed said that the most important reason for the revolt was the "anxiety about the [low] probability of finding a job related to one's studies." For another 35 percent, the key reason was the "unresponsiveness of the university to the needs of a modern society."[3]

With university enrollment soaring, the employment outlook for French graduates has continued to deteriorate through the 1970s, leading to widescale joblessness. Of some 160,000 graduates of French universities in 1975, 100,000 were unemployed in late 1976. Renewed French student strikes and demonstrations in 1976 were even more obviously tied to the dismal job prospects for university graduates than were the events of 1968.[4] In Italy, virtually all observers agreed that a major cause of the student strikes, demonstrations, sitins, bombings and burnings that paralyzed Italian universities for months in 1977 was the grim employment outlook for the growing number of graduates. The University of Rome, built for 40,000, now has 135,000 students and is often called a huge "parking lot" where Italy stores its unwanted and unneeded members.

THE JOB CRISIS for college graduates in the United States has not taken a political direction, but Wright and Hamilton have totally misread our article (Paul Blumberg and James M. Murtha, "College Graduates and the American Dream," Winter 1977) when they claim that we predicted the inevitable radicalization of underemployed graduates who would form the vanguard of a new working class in this country. We suggested that this crisis of underemployment might manifest itself in a wide variety of political or nonpolitical ways. Graduates might come to blame the universities, the corporations, the government, or even themselves. They might redefine their goals, turning away from career toward family or other personal, extra-vocational fulfillment. Politically, they might turn left or right or, perhaps even more likely, we said, end up "in a kind of privatized despair that has much psychological but little social and political effect." And we cautioned, "Never underestimate the capacity of Americans to individualize even the most collective misfortunes and social evils."

In 1976 the *New York Times* conducted interviews in 14 cities across the country with dozens of psychiatrists, mental health counsellors, and others who treat the emotional problems of young people. The study revealed that significant numbers of young people were experiencing serious "disillusionment and depression," central to which was their economic plight once they are out of college. According to the report, "The nation's depressed job market—especially the gap that has developed between the number of college graduates and the number of available jobs that usually go to college graduates—appears to be a major cause of the depression experienced by many young people."

In the face of all this contrary evidence, what explains Wright and Hamilton's rather unexpected finding that college-educated manual workers are a cheerful lot? The answer is that they have simply misread their own data. Their article purports to examine "college-educated" manual workers, but the vast majority of the workers in their sample are not college-educated at all, in the usual sense of having completed a college education and earned a degree. As Wright and Hamilton themselves grant, 85 percent of the manual workers in this country who have been to college have not graduated, and of the great mass who attended junior college, only a tiny proportion have earned even a two-year degree. Thus, the typical "college-educated" worker Wright and Hamilton studied is a college dropout after a couple of semesters at a junior college or at a low-level four-year college.

This is not merely a semantic point, for the typical skilled or even semiskilled manual worker who dropped out of college after one or two semesters is not overeducated at all, and thus his relatively high level of job satisfaction is totally unrelated to his alleged educational overqualification. The only "college-educated" manual workers who are clearly overtrained are those who are college *graduates*. But in the University of Michigan study of some 1,500 persons, on which Wright and Hamilton base their conclusions and which they bill as "the largest, most detailed survey on attitudes about work ever undertaken," there were exactly *11* blue-collar college graduates! In a personal communication, Robert Quinn, the co-director of the University of Michigan study, said of Wright and Hamilton's overall method and their technique of combining manual workers who have a little college with manual workers who have graduated from college, that lumping the two

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groups together and calling them college educated is totally misleading.

If Wright and Hamilton had actually wanted to use the Michigan survey to examine the job satisfaction of educationally overqualified workers, rather than trying to make some polemical points about the new working class, they would not have lacked valid and reliable measures. For example, each respondent in the survey was asked how much formal education he had attained and also how much formal education he thought was necessary to do his job. The difference between these two provides a natural measure of overeducation as perceived by workers themselves.[5] Using this measure to examine the job satisfaction of all white- and blue-collar workers in the Michigan study, we see that workers who have more education than their jobs require are in fact far more likely to be dissatisfied than workers whose education just fits their job requirements or workers whose jobs require more education than they have attained (see the Table). Moreover, the greater the amount of overtraining, the greater the level of job dissatisfaction. Finally, investigating the psychological characteristics of educationally overqualified workers in the same Michigan study used by Wright and Hamilton, Quinn found that such workers were far more likely than others to suffer from low self-esteem and periods of depression ("Overeducation and Jobs . . . ," p. 6).

Average Job Satisfaction Score, by Relative Levels of Education

Worker's level of education relative to what a worker reports is needed for his or her job	*Average overall job satisfaction (z-scores)**
Worker has four or more years of education short of that needed (Number of cases (N)=107)	.22
Worker has two years of education short of that needed (N=182)	.17
Worker has the level of education needed (N=788)	.07
Worker has two years of education in excess of that needed (N=227)	-.07
Worker has four or more years of education in excess of that needed (N=176)	-.54

*Job satisfaction scores here can range from -1 to +1, with the average at zero. Higher numerical scores indicate higher levels of job satisfaction. Statistically, there is less than one chance in a thousand that these results occurred by chance.

SOURCE: Robert P. Quinn and Martha S. Baldi de Mandilovitch, *Education and Job Satisfaction: A Questionable Payoff*, NIE Papers in Education and Work: Number 5 (Wash., D.C.: National Institute of Education, 1977), p. 21.

A final note. Choosing to concentrate mainly on manual workers with a little college attendance, Wright and Hamilton quickly dismiss the career problems of college graduates with the remark that 90 percent of graduates get white-collar jobs and most eventually find adequate opportunities for advancement. But by using the catch-all term "white collar," they conceal what is happening to graduates within the white-collar ranks.

The fact is—to take but one manifestation of the problem—that today a higher proportion of college graduates than ever before are compelled to accept low-level clerical and sales jobs, as the number of graduates continues to exceed the number of desirable white-collar professional and managerial jobs. A graduate in philosophy who ends up selling shoes at Macy's has indeed, by the census definition, obtained a "white-collar" position. A graduate in English able to find a job only as a typist is, formally, a white-collar worker. But whether this is a cause for complacency, as Wright and Hamilton suggest, is another matter entirely. What is especially amusing about their sanguine celebration of college graduates in lower white-collar jobs is that in their other writings, both Wright and Hamilton insist that lower white-collar workers are simply part of the working class and should be treated theoretically as such. Thus, Wright has argued elsewhere,

> . . . there no longer seems to be any good reason, other than convention, to consider that lower clerical and sales workers . . . are in any realistic sense "middle class". . . . The most persuasive case for this placement of lower white-collar workers [in the working class] has been made by Hamilton.[6]

Not only do Wright and Hamilton ignore the burgeoning literature on the underutilization of college graduates, they do not even give passing mention to the employment problems of advanced degree holders—the career disaster awaiting the intellectual reserve army of Ph.D.s in the 1980s (see, e.g., Allan Cartter's excellent *Ph.D.'s and the Academic Labor Market*). Nor do they mention the enormous oversupply of persons seeking to enter law, schoolteaching, the academy, and other professions.

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If higher education in this country were still an elitist enterprise, concerned only with polishing small numbers of upper-class children, the issue might be safely ignored. But as American universities are now turning onto the job market about a million graduates a year, it requires a special kind of social myopia to dismiss with a phrase the career crisis facing this college-educated mass. □

Notes

[1]James O'Toole, "The Reserve Army of the Underemployed, Part I," *Change* (May 1975), p. 28.

[2]Robert P. Quinn, "Overeducation and Jobs: Can the Great Training Robbery Be Stopped?" Paper presented at the 83rd annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, August 1975; Arne L. Kalleberg and Aage B. Sørensen, "The Measurement of the Effects of Overtraining on Job Attitudes," *Sociological Methods and Research* (November 1973), pp. 215-38; Survey Research Center, University of Michigan, *Survey of Working Conditions: Final Report on Univariate and Bivariate Tables* (Wash., D.C.: U.S. Govt. Printing Office, 1971), pp. 405, 408-409.

[3]Raymond Boudon, "Sources of Student Protest in France," in Philip G. Altbach and Robert S. Laufer, eds., *The New Pilgrims: Youth Protest in Transition* (New York: McKay, 1972), p. 300.

[4]Michelle Patterson, "Governmental Policy and Equality in Higher Education: the Junior Collegization of the French University," *Social Problems* (December 1976), pp. 173-83.

[5]Other measures of overeducation devised by Quinn and his associates that Wright and Hamilton might have used: compare a worker's educational attainment (1) with the amount of education required for his job as estimated by the General Educational Development codes of the Dictionary of Occupational Titles; (2) with the average amount of education attained by all workers in his occupation as shown in the census; (3) with the amount of education attained by all those in the worker's immediate work group.

[6]James Wright, "In Search of a New Working Class," paper presented at the annual meetings of the Eastern Sociological Society, New York City, March 19, 1977. I am grateful to Professor Dean Savage for this reference. See also Richard Hamilton, *Class and Politics in the United States* (New York: Wiley, 1972). □

II: Richard Hamilton and James Wright Reply

Our article in the spring 1978 issue of *Dissent* reported some results from our research on the relationship between education and job satisfaction among white male manual workers. We reported a number of findings showing, first of all, generally high levels of work satisfaction and, second, that "college-educated workers" (defined specifically as blue-collar workers with at least one or more years of college education) were essentially no different in outlook from manual workers having only a high-school education or less. We indicated that this college-educated segment was a growing part of the blue-collar ranks, and we offered the further observation that predictions about their presumed radicalism, made by many writers, do not have a firm basis in fact. We stand by every one of these conclusions, for a very simple reason—Blumberg's comment on our article has not touched our arguments or evidence at any essential point.

Let us review briefly Blumberg's case. First, he has given an inaccurate portrayal of our procedures. Phrases such as "browsing around" and "chanced upon one unusual statistic" do not accurately describe what we have done. Our *Dissent* article reviews a number of measures of work satisfaction, each showing the same result. As reported in the article, these results obtain not just in the Michigan employment survey, but in the NORC General Social Surveys as well. Our "case,"

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as he calls it, is therefore based on systematic review of every available indicator of the key dependent variable in not one but four large, recent representative national surveys. There is no reasonable standard by which this can accurately be called a "slender foundation." What *is* "slender" is Blumberg's caricature of our findings, which drops all reference to the three NORC studies we used and refers to "one unusual statistic" when the article makes clear there is a whole series of "unusual statistics" that require explanation.

Blumberg attempts to cast further doubt on the findings with a rhetorical formulation of a key result: "manual workers who had been to college *seemed to have* about as high levels of job satisfaction" (our italics) as those who had not. However, it is not a matter of "seeming" at all. This is what the respondents themselves have reported, and if what they have reported "seems" unlikely, then Blumberg or anyone else can check it out. Our critic suggests he has an argument here: as opposed to mere appearances that surface in sample surveys, he *knows* the contrary reality. But what is the basis for this contrary and putatively "higher" knowledge? Blumberg's comment does not speak to this point, save for an opening reference to "common sense." We grant that the findings run counter to "common sense" in that they are counterintuitive and rather unexpected, given the various claims that Blumberg and others have made about the likely consequences of "overeducation." But this does not make those findings any less real; refutation by empirical evidence, it may be noted, is the fate of many "commonsensical" notions. Perhaps Blumberg has better evidence on the job satisfactions of college-educated blue-collar workers, but if so he has surely not bothered to present any of it in his comment. And he does not, at any point, deal directly with the evidence *we* present. His opinion seems to be that this evidence can be safely ignored just because its implications are "extremely bizarre," which is just another way of saying that evidence can be ignored whenever it is convenient to do so, a rather spurious intellectual standard at best.

BLUMBERG CLAIMS **that we have "essentially" said that "people who spend eight hours a day working at jobs that are beneath both their aspirations and their abilities are perfectly happy about it."** We have, of course, said nothing of the sort. What we have said, first of all, relates not to "people" in general but to college-educated blue-collar workers specifically. The extension of our results to "people" in general is entirely unwarranted and unjustifiable. When we report on white male blue-collar workers with some years of college education, we are *not* talking about salaried white-collar workers, we are *not* talking about college graduates (our article emphasizes that the "overwhelming majority"—in this case, about 85 percent—do not have a college degree), nor are we talking about French, German, or Italian students. These, to be sure, are worthwhile topics for concern and research, but they are not the subject of our article. Blumberg's persistent digressions to these points, in short, are simply not relevant to the substance of our presentation.

Also, we have *not* said that the jobs of college-educated blue-collar workers are "beneath their aspirations and their abilities." We do report some evidence to suggest that many of the people in question aspire to higher things, but there is nothing in the evidence to suggest that they consider their present jobs somehow "beneath" them. Their "abilities" are also a separate analytic question, one not touched on in our presentation. And finally, we do *not* say that these people are "perfectly happy" with their jobs. We report that about one-half of them say they are "very satisfied" with their jobs, and that 80-90 percent say they are "very" or "somewhat" satisfied. But, as the Michigan survey makes apparent, even those who are very satisfied with their work often report some dissatisfaction with one or more aspects of it. Blumberg's recasting of our conclusions is an egregious distortion of what we have said.

Blumberg declares that we have "ignored all the evidence" that contradicts our thesis. This seems to us to be about the most dubious of his claims. Our *Dissent* piece contains references to a book by Richard Freeman, two of James O'Toole's works, a book by William and Margaret Westley, an article by Levitan and Taggart, and the Bowles and Gintis work, all of which, in one way or another, "contradict" our claims. We have considered the arguments and evidence of these and many other authors at some length in our as yet unpublished work in this area.[1] As Blumberg must surely realize, one cannot touch on all details of these "contradictory" arguments in a brief five-page summary of a much larger work.

Blumberg says that our "argument is curious . . . ," it "runs counter to everything we know about the experience of educated workers in routine jobs." This formulation suggests, first, that our case is merely "an argument," i.e., no more than a logical case, whereas the case is based, as we

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have already emphasized, on detailed evidence from several different sources. The formulation also suggests that our "argument" (and by implication, our evidence) is somehow inconsistent with a large body of countervailing evidence amassed by others. This too is simply false. Such inconsistencies as there are between our work and the work of others is almost invariably an inconsistency between their *assertions* and our *data* or, in some cases, between their assertions and their own data. For example, Westley and Westley are quoted in our article to the effect that "the more educated the blue-collar worker, the more likely he is to be dissatisfied with his work." In the *evidence* reported in that book, however, the difference in job satisfaction between blue-collar workers with a high-school degree and those with one or more years of college was *less than one percentage point*, quite consistent with our findings. The well-known study by Harold Sheppard and Neil Herrick, *Where Have All the Robots Gone? Job Dissatisfaction in the '70's* (Free Press, 1972), contains the following passage: "Surprisingly enough, almost identical percentage [sic] of workers among the following three groups expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs: those with an elementary school education or less, those with a seventh to twelfth grade education, and those who had progressed beyond high school" (p. 8). The source for this passage is the 1969 Michigan work survey, the precursor to the 1972-73 survey on which our article was partly based; the findings from both surveys point quite clearly to the same conclusion.

As proof that we have "ignored" all contrary evidence, Blumberg quotes a passage from an essay by James O'Toole that "the placing of intelligent and/or highly qualified workers in dull and unchallenging jobs is a prescription for pathology." This conclusion, in O'Toole's words, is "clear from almost every study of job dissatisfaction." In the original article, however, only *one* study ("a counterintuitive study undertaken by Sandia Laboratories") is cited in support of this claim, and in the companion essay by O'Toole we find the following quotation: ". . . educational credentials show little correlation with job success or satisfaction."[2] That certainly *seems* consistent with our findings. Another work cited by Blumberg to refute our conclusions is Ivar Berg's *Education and Jobs*. Yet, in a table on p. 126 of Berg's work, the reader will find a correlation of -.07 between education and job dissatisfaction among blue-collar workers. This finding of a negligible correlation we would also take as being consonant with our results. It and the other findings discussed above also contradict Blumberg's naive claim about "everything we know." The fact is, virtually all previous *evidence* on the relationship between education and job satisfaction among blue-collar workers shows the same pattern as that reported in our article.

We have not ignored Berg's work, in fact we hold it in high esteem, it being one of the relatively few analyses of "overeducation" that pay attention to available evidence on the topic. Unfortunately, much of the book is irrelevant to the concerns of our article because it does not differentiate between blue-collar and white-collar workers. Further, the chapter devoted specifically to "The Blue Collar Worker: A Special Case" is based almost entirely on survey data gathered in 1947. Since most of the "increase in educational opportunity" for the blue-collar ranks comes after that, a review of evidence from the 1970s seems to us entirely appropriate. In passing, it may be noted that Berg finds a stronger relationship between skill level (measured by the training requirement) and job satisfaction. This was the case for all levels of education. The same table (p. 126) also shows that the best-educated blue-collar workers tend to have these highly skilled jobs and that these workers are highly satisfied with their jobs. Thus, these findings are also generally consistent with our results.

Berg's sixth chapter, "Educational Achievements and Job-related Attitudes," review several relevant studies of white-collar workers. Although these studies, as we say, do not directly bear on our immediate concern, they do bear on Blumberg's depiction of "everything we know." Contrasting his bold claims of near-unanimous consensus in the existing literature, five of the studies in the review showed decreasing satisfaction with increasing education, three showed the exact opposite pattern (increasing satisfaction with increasing education), and five more showed "no difference in job attitudes among workers differing in education" (p. 110). Berg also summarizes the results from Arthur Kornhauser's *Mental Health of the Industrial Worker* (Wiley, 1965): "The overall results do *not* confirm the expectations that better educated men in routine jobs exhibit poorer mental health than do those with less education" (p. 118, our emphasis).

The comments on France, Italy, and West Germany, as indicated above, address questions that are extraneous to our purposes and presentation. That is to say, they too are irrelevant to our arguments and evidence.

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BLUMBERG CLAIMS we have "totally misread" his and Murtha's article on "College Graduates and the American Dream" when we say that they have "predicted the inevitable radicalization of underemployed graduates who would form the vanguard of a new working class in this country." But nowhere in our text do we say that they claimed this, least of all as an "inevitability." We did quote them, entirely accurately, as saying that the aspiration-opportunity disparity constituted the "most potentially explosive force for radicalizing educated labor." And we did link this potential to the notion of a vanguard, although they did not specifically use that word. Instead, they spoke of the "intersection where personal troubles become social issues. And in this social issue lies the potential for social change." If the notion of a vanguard is inappropriate here, which we doubt, we would, nevertheless, be willing to withdraw it.

Blumberg and Murtha do discuss a range of other possibilities. If the "most potentially explosive force" is not realized, various other things might happen; e.g., privatized despair, individualized solutions. These, however, are clearly billed in their article as lesser likelihoods, their chances being lower than "the most potentially explosive" option. As to our ideas about the relative probabilities, they are stated quite clearly in the third to last paragraph of our article. What the Blumberg and Murtha article spells out is a set of theoretical possibilities, of potential reactions. What our article spells out is the available evidence on which of these possibilities is presently being realized among one segment of the overeducated labor force, namely, college-educated manual workers. And that evidence, to emphasize, is very hard to square with *any* depiction of "explosive potential."

A FURTHER POINT to note in this connection is that the original Blumberg and Murtha article is written so as to "cover" virtually any imaginable reaction. What they are saying is that the overeducated may revolt or they may not, they may blame themselves or they may blame the educational structure or they may blame the corporations or they may blame the system as a whole, they may seek collective political solutions or they may not—all depending on undefined circumstances. It is very hard to quarrel with such a formulation, except to note that it is virtually devoid of meaningful content.

In discussing the likely reactions of the overeducated, Blumberg draws heavily on overly dramatic phraseologies such as "privatized despair" or "the capacity of Americans to individualize even the most collective misfortunes and social evils." Assuming he means these points to apply to the people studied in our article, the implication is that manual work is a source of despair, misfortune, and evil to any college-educated person unlucky enough to be caught doing it. We also reject this unwarranted and unsubstantiated interpretation; on the contrary, we think (and the evidence supports) that many people, even some with one or more years of college, can have a genuine liking for some blue-collar jobs. If there were no other evidence on this point, we could cite the young man mentioned in the initial Blumberg and Murtha article, the son of a successful New Jersey businessman who decided to become a truck driver. "Trucking," he said, "is a dirty, hard, rough job, and that is just the reason I like it. It appeals to me because it is so masculine." That is, as they say, almost a parody, but more serious instances of outright liking for blue-collar work also appear in the literature, for example, in L. L. LeMaster's participant observation study, *Blue Collar Aristocrats* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1975). LeMasters, himself of working-class origin, spent five years of partcipant observation among a group of skilled blue-collar workers and reports, "I never heard a single man say that he hated his work—or even disliked it . . . as a group the men seemed to enjoy their work." This, incidentally, is another previous study that shows results entirely consistent with our own.

We are prepared to believe the results of the interviews with psychiatrists, etc., conducted by the *New York Times*. What Blumberg has to say about these materials sounds entirely plausible to us. But then again, since those materials deal with not-yet-employed students and we deal with employed blue-collar workers, that too is an irrelevancy.

Blumberg feels that we have "simply misread" our own data, since very few of the "college-educated" manual workers are graduates. It is hard to see this as a misreading, since it is a point we dwell on throughout our article. In fact, we emphasize that much of the existing speculation on "overeducation" is restricted, without justification, to the case of college graduates, that the situation of college dropouts is a parallel and perhaps even more serious problem, and that our article is in part a corrective to this needless restriction. What Blumberg takes to be a telling criticism of our article is nothing more than a totally accurate restatement of our own points.[3]

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We sharply disagree with Blumberg's claim that the only blue-collar workers who are "clearly overtrained" are the graduates. Some time ago, we made use of the item from the employment survey, to which he now calls our attention, which asks, "what level of formal education do you feel is needed by a person in your job?" (Blumberg faults us for "ignoring" this indicator from the survey, but here again, there is a limit to how much one fits into a five-page summary piece.) Contrary to Blumberg's assertion that only the graduates are "clearly overtrained," three-quarters of the blue-collar workers with at least some college education said that a high-school degree or less would be sufficient.[4] As indicated, they also reported generally high levels of job satisfaction.

We are obviously quite well aware of the number of blue-collar college graduates in the surveys. That is the reason we said nothing about them. We *have* checked the subject out with the six NORC surveys conducted between 1972 and 1977; even combining six surveys, there are only 34 white male blue-collar workers who reported four years of college or more. But we find nothing distinctive about the job outlooks of these 34: 82.3 percent of them said they were "very" or "somewhat" satisfied with their work, *vs.* 82.4 percent of those with one to three years of college. Although 34 cases can hardly be definitive, these results do not suggest that the difference between college dropouts and college-graduated manual workers is nearly as important as Blumberg claims. And given that there does not appear to be any significant difference in outlook between the two groups, it is hard to see how combining them is "totally misleading."

The results provided by Blumberg from the Quinn and Baldi de Mandilovitch study are also of considerable interest in their own right. But relative to Blumberg's "case" against us, this evidence involves the same problem we have noted all along, Blumberg's unwillingness to recognize the focus of our study. We report on the white male blue-collar workers in the employment survey (some 533 cases, of which 104 report some or more college education), whereas the Quinn and Baldi de Mandilovitch table is based on the entire sample (using all 1,480 cases). Since the two studies have these different foci and use different measures (for both dependent and independent variables), it is impossible, without further research, to determine the reasons for the differences in conclusion. One obvious possibility is that there is very little relationship between education (absolute or relative) and job satisfaction among blue-collar workers (as we report) but that a strong relationship appears elsewhere in the social structure (as they report). Very few of our college-educated manual workers would fall into their last and most dissatisfied category of "four or more years excess education," simply because very few of our workers have four years of education past high school. Off-hand, it occurs to us that most of the people we have written about would fall into their third or fourth categories, i.e., would fall somewhere between $\pm$ .07 standard deviation units of the mean job satisfaction. If so, then the Quinn-Baldi de Mandilovitch finding is entirely consistent with the finding we report, namely, that there is no distinctiveness in the job outlooks of blue-collar workers with one or more years of college education. (These comments, to be sure, are no more than guesses on our part based on the research we have done so far. There is an obvious next step to the process, checking it out. This strikes us as a much more fruitful line of endeavor than Blumberg's, i.e., denunciation of the unpalatable finding.)

BLUMBERG'S PRESENTATION of the findings of the Quinn and Baldi de Mandilovitch research is highly selective and rather misleading. The first half of their report discusses the relationship between absolute levels of education and job satisfaction; none of this material is mentioned by Blumberg. The authors identify 16 previous studies that "dealt directly with the relationship"; of the 16, five found a positive association (satisfaction *increased* with education), three found a negative association, and "eight reported the relationship to be either nonexistent or equivocal."[5] The authors also reanalyze data from nine national surveys bearing on the same issue. "All of the observed relationships were modest at best, the correlations never exceeding .12" (p.v). All this material, of course, is entirely consistent with the findings reported in our article.

The second half of the Quinn-Baldi de Mandilovitch report attempts to assess the relationship between relative levels of education and job satisfaction, "relative" in this instance being relative to the amount of education one's job requires. In all, Quinn and Baldi de Mandilovitch construct four measures of "relative education." One of the four is correlated with job satisfaction at .00—i.e., shows no relationship to job satisfaction at all. Two of the others show weak correlations in the expected direction; the coefficients are .14 in both cases. The fourth measure shows a moderate

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positive correlation of .21, again in the expected direction. This fourth measure, and only it, is the one that Blumberg presents in his text. And yet he accuses us of running roughshod over the available evidence in order to score polemical points!

Blumberg's "final note" about the fate of college graduates in white-collar employment constitutes another irrelevant digression since we are talking about college dropouts employed in blue-collar occupations. To emphasize: our focus on one segment of the larger totality should not be taken to imply that no other segment of that totality is worthy of investigation. At the same time, it is an outrage to suggest that the focus on one segment is an effort to "conceal" what is going on in another. The job outlooks of college graduates in low-level clerical and sales jobs certainly deserve research attention, but that was not the topic of our article.

It is nice of Blumberg to acknowledge that we have dealt extensively with the white-collar ranks in other publications. We stand by the claims and the evidence presented there and elsewhere. (On this point, we might mention that Blumberg "ignores" the evidence on the topic contained in Richard Hamilton, *Restraining Myths*, Sage-Halstead-Wiley, 1975). As our previous research attests, we think there are many important questions to be raised about lower white-collar workers; the relationship between education and job satisfaction in their ranks is obviously one of them. But these too are matters that can only be resolved by investigation and research on the subject; expostulation will be of little help.

dissent

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While on the subject of ignored literature, we would like to digress a moment and ask why Blumberg has not made any reference at all to the definitive review by Robert Quinn et al., *Job Satisfaction: Is There a Trend?*[6] Why does he "conceal" the following conclusion from that study?

> In spite of public speculation to the contrary, there is no conclusive evidence of a widespread, dramatic decline in job satisfaction. Reanalysis of 15 national surveys conducted since 1958 indicates that there has not been any significant decrease in overall levels of job satisfaction over the last decade [p. 1].

Surely that is relevant to *his* claim. □

Notes

[1]The original study, based on the NORC surveys, is R. Hamilton and J. Wright, "College-Educated Blue Collar Workers," read at the annual meetings of the American Sociological Association in New York, August 1976. The replication and follow-up of the initial findings in the Michigan survey are in "Education and Job Attitudes among Blue Collar Workers," forthcoming in *Sociology of Work and Occupations*.

[2]The O'Toole work in question is a two-part essay on "The Reserve Army of the Underemployed" appearing in the May and June 1975 issues of *Change*. The quotation concerning educational credentials is from the second part, p. 27.

[3]The title under which our piece is run, "Blue Collars, Cap and Gown," is highly misleading on these points, as "caps and gowns" are usually associated with graduation, which very few of our college-educated workers have experienced. The reference to "cap and gown" is not ours; the title for the piece, to our surprise, was chosen by *Dissent*'s editors.

[4]These results are reported and discussed in our forthcoming article, "Education and Job Attitudes. . . ." (see note 1).

[5]*Education and Job Satisfaction: A Questionable Payoff* (National Institute of Education, 1977), p.v.

[6]U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower Research Monograph #30, 1974. □

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Henry Pachter

Jews and Other People

FREUD, JEWS AND OTHER GERMANS: MASTERS AND VICTIMS IN MODERNIST CULTURE, by Peter Gay. New York: Oxford University Press. 289 pp. $12.95.

THE ORDEAL OF CIVILITY: FREUD, MARX, LÉVI-STRAUSS, AND THE JEWISH STRUGGLE WITH MODERNITY, by John Murray Cuddihy. New York: Basic Books. 272 pp. $11.95.

Professor Cuddihy thinks that the tradition of a Judeo-Christian religion is a pious but viciously conceived myth and that the "lachrymose history" of Jewish persecution in the Middle Ages has been invented to conceal the fact that the Jews were not ready to be emancipated and join Western civilization. I have waited to discuss his provocative book until I could review it together with its antidote. Chapters of Professor Gay's book were published long before Cuddihy appeared in print, but every word seems to have been written to refute Cuddihy.

The two works have a superficial resemblance in that they are loose assemblages of essays circling around the two themes, "modernity" and "Jews"; but there the similarity ends. Peter Gay frankly admits that only the unity of his own thoughts justifies the *chutzpah* of throwing Sigmund Freud and Johannes Brahms together in one volume. Cuddihy's *chutzpah* is more subtle (provided that noun can take that adjective): he forces a unity of thought on a group of individuals as diverse as Freud and Abbie (who was he?) Hoffman, so that the various chapters appear to have been written as one book. Since this cannot be done without considerable acrobatics, he has to be brilliant, provocative, challenging, controversial, and whatever those blurb words are, whereas in reality he is merely skimpy, swaggering, and superficial. The shoddiness of his scholarship stands in stark contrast to the weighty and deliberate, though graceful, prose of Peter Gay. But the very forwardness of his style, his ability to "put the whole dimension of modernization in a formula" (a phrase to delight Ed Newman) makes fascinating reading.

For all his name seems to tell, Mr. Cuddihy is not a Jew, but he shares with many eminent Jews the monotheistic vice of system-thinking: of extrapolating a comparatively minor discovery (such as infant sexuality, the special theory of relativity, or the marketing behavior of individuals in bourgeois society) into an all-encompassing world view. In this case he has taken an old complaint of the anti-Semites—that Jews are always forward—and expanded it into a theory of culture. Jewish emancipation, it says, brought the culturally backward, tribalist Jew up against a culture that had become genteel; inevitably he gave offense. Then the Jewish intellectual rose to the "money Jew's" defense: he built the fence of "objective science" that enclosed a neutral space where people from various cultures could meet. The salon, the masonic lodge, the liberal state did the same for the educated Jew. "Sociologically, the quest of the Jewish intellectual for value-neutral social sciences and the quest of the Jewish bourgeois for value-neutral social places are one event." The whole thrust of "modernity" is the separation of home from job, of politics from economics, of culture from social system, of fact from value, of theory from practice.

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So far we are still in the wake of Weber's, Tawney's, or Talcott Parson's interpretation of modernity. But now comes Cuddihy's interesting turn: hitherto we had believed that Jews may become rebels (or literary avant-gardists) when they find that progress of gentile society along the path of Enlightenment has not been far or fast enough. Wrong, says Professor Cuddihy: Jews who are conscious of their tribal heritage, and do not quite succeed in acquiring the "civility" of modern society, will talk back and become rebels. But they will do so under the guise of "objective" science; their social malaise then becomes a medical symptom common to all mankind; their inability to become acculturated becomes alienation; "their *kvetches* become hysterical complaints, *tsuris* become basic anxiety, social shame becomes moral guilt." Witty indeed, but can an aperçu be flattened out into a book?

Cuddihy has no problems showing us Karl Marx telling the gentiles: But is not everybody interested in money?—and Sigmund Freud: But is not everybody interested in sex?—and Lévi-Strauss: But is not everybody using tribal archetypes? Kids cocking snooks at civilization, they are all trying to "break the shields of decorum," they are waging a *Kulturkampf* against civility: "The civil surface of the *bürgerliche Gesellschaft* bugs and infuriates each generation of *shtetl* Jewry emancipated into the West." That some populations indeed resist acculturation need hardly be documented; Cuddihy quotes Gandhi and Kemal Pasha as well as African leaders and U.S. blacks, though no Irish—but Jews? Who have all too often been accused of running ahead of every fashion, of being pioneers of capitalism? and especially Jewish rebels? Come on . . .

In his psycho-sociological lingo, Cuddihy writes:

> Marxism and other ideologies do appeal . . . to subcultures . . . undergoing the excruciation of delayed modernization . . . Progressivism for Midwestern "Bible Belt" Protestantism, Coughlinism and McCarthyism for Irish Catholics, and Stalinism-Marxism-Trotskyism for Eastern European Jews, all perform the same latent function: They appeal to the premodern Gemeinschafts-type past of these subcultures.

Even Einstein's well-known indifference to formal attire is recruited to show Jews in the role of existential nonconformists, and in all seriousness this informality is asserted to be "not unrelated" to the unconventionality of his scientific concepts—as though the anti-Semitic Professor Roethe at Berlin University had not been known for his dirty vests! As though the progress of physics through 500 years had not been a chain of unconventional views!

But with Cuddihy on the lookout, the Jews cannot win. Let them be conventional and assimilatory, let them try to catch up with "modernism"—they invariably fail, for their pathetic efforts only reveal their lack of authenticity; vainly do they try to hide under the umbrella of universal reason. The Jewish passion for the universal is unmasked as a clever protective mimicry: if there is no French, German, Negro, or Jewish mathematics, then there is no need to confess one's Jewishness. Universalism has one additional advantage: it affords the Jews a "code language" in which they may call "our crowd" to order without giving themselves away to the gentiles. "Thou shalt not reveal in-group secrets to the goyim," reads the "Eleventh Commandment." And what is this secret? That Jews are what anti-Semites say they are: money-grubbing, ostentatious, and clannish. The "Eleventh Commandment" notwithstanding, Cuddihy is able to quote many Jewish "confessions" of guilt and shame.

Nevertheless, to avoid attacking their capitalistic *mishpocheh* in public, Marx and Trotsky attacked *all* capitalists. Ingenious! Brilliant! Having looked through Marx's deception, we need to explain only one more small thing: what hidden secret caused the conversion to socialism of Norman Thomas, Fidel Castro, Elizabeth Gurney Flynn, Jean Jaurès, Vladimir Lenin, Wilhelm Liebknecht? Likewise, having so elegantly "explained" Freud as having chosen a dirty Jewish science instead of nobleness, we are waiting for Mr. Cuddihy's psychoanalysis of sex researchers Havelock Ellis, Alfred Kinsey, Aldous Huxley. Or did Charles Darwin, too, "choose Yiddishkeit over nobleness"?

PETER GAY is also concerned with the psychology of the outsider. His book on *Weimar Culture* has the subtitle *The Outsider as Insider*; i.e., those who had been the opposition under the Empire were culturally at the center of the Republic. In this new book Gay considers Jewish intellectuals and other outsiders at the turn of the century. For in Wilhelminian Germany Jews were among the pioneers and supporters of modernity. Gay is not ashamed of it, but he voices the caveat that "modernism" is a very ambiguous term, pointing to both rational and irrationalist explorations, celebrating both intelligence and expression.

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Second, he warns that Jews were found on both sides of all issues of modernity: Not all modernists were Jews nor all Jews modernists, and many Jews who were modernists were so not because they were Jews. Whereas Cuddihy states flatly at the end of his book: "Our third conclusion is: the modernization process is 'objectively anti-Semitic,'" Gay agrees with all others who have studied the question that "anti-Semitism was, in short, an irrational protest against the modern world."

But modernism itself is a complex phenomenon; it includes the civilizing process of "modernization" as well as the literary "modernism" that is both its ideological proclamation and the protest against it. Professor Gay shows that literary rebels often were "bourgeois" in their private lives and, on the other hand, that conservatives often were innovators. "To be, like Freud, a thoroughgoing revolutionary and a thoroughgoing bourgeois was by no means a rarity." For all his idol-smashing discoveries and for all his struggle against bourgeois hypocrisy, Freud was, after all, deeply indebted to middle-class values. On the other hand, rummaging through old concert reviews, Gay shows that a "conservative" composer such as Brahms was so modern in his time that he was not understood, and he finds a strain of modernity even in Eduard Hanslick, the ill-starred critic who paid for his derogation of Wagner's music by being immortalized as Beckmesser.

It appears at once that Professor Gay's analysis of Wilhelminian culture is both more subtle and more down to earth than Cuddihy's. He will discard the most brilliant aperçu if its content is at odds with stubborn facts; he makes short shrift of pretty myths like "the unpolitical German" or of scapegoats like the authoritarian father, of one-dimensional images like the archetypal Jew or the archetypal German anti-Semite. He sees a broad, many-faceted movement toward modernism, which obviously was concentrated in the urban middle class, and especially among the professions in which there existed a strong contingent of Jews. The Jews, moreover, were distributed over the entire spectrum of political and cultural opinions: the Conservative Stahl, the Liberal Lasker, the Social Democrat Bernstein; promoters of Expressionism, and disciples of Stefan George; Wagnerians and anti-Wagnerians; imperialists and pacifists. Some, like Wagner's conductor Hermann Levi, submitted to humiliating conditions in order to be allowed to participate in the triumph of German culture; others, like Simmel, standing aloof in dignity, nevertheless contributed their share to the development of that culture. But whether they were in the mainstream or in opposition, Jews were sharing the rewards and the anxieties of the Empire, and "they had good reason to feel themselves, or to aspire to feel themselves, to be Jewish Germans." The expressionist Carl Sternheim is quoted: "The trouble with German Jews is not that they are Jews but that they are Germans."

Peter Gay here makes two points: Jews were neither better nor worse, neither smarter nor stupider than Germans (his call for a research project on stupid Jews is to be warmly supported). For every anarchist Herbert Marcuse, Jews have produced five conservative Nathan Glazers, for Einstein a hundred Rabbi Korffs. Second, the anxiety that accompanied modernization was reflected in some regressive traits of modernism (in *Weimar Culture* Gay called it "the craving for wholeness") and also, among the most vulgar, in anti-Semitism. But in the Wilhelminian class structure this disreputable expression of social malaise could hardly be taken seriously; these people did not count.

Of course, we who know the outcome are apt to smile incredulously; working back from his hindsight, Mr. Gay also finds "the problematic" (in Goethe's sense: lacking ability to cope with reality) in many of the Jews who contributed to the development of German culture. But then all modernism was "problematic," and Jewish intellectuals were floating in a general movement that only "professional anti-Semites" could identify as "Jewish." By all criteria, they were as well entitled to call themselves German as any Catholic or Christian Scientist; looking at their situation from their own vantage point, they had to interpret its few inconveniences as either remnants of a passing age or as "infantile disorders" of the new age.* They were looking back on a hundred years of emancipation and forward to full integration. What needs to be explained, Mr. Gay says, is not their misconception but the fact that it did turn out to be a misconception. He considers the Nazi episode as one of the possible alternatives to which

*Jews could not become officers in the Kaiser's army—but they also were the most irreverent (Cuddihy might say uncivil) critics of that feudal institution. Mr. Gay's charge that Jews could not become university professors is not supported by his own statistics: Jews, who constituted 1 percent of the population, occupied 3 percent of all university chairs. True, one *Privatdozent* out of eight was a Jew waiting for an appointment; but that proves rising expectations as much as discrimination.

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German history could turn, not as the foreordained awakening after an idle daydream.

PETER GAY has written extensively on the Enlightenment, and, as these essays show, he is still its disciple. He regrets that the path Moses Mendelssohn and his gentile friend Gotthold Ephraim Lessing had opened was blocked by nationalism a hundred years later—a development that Cuddihy registers, if not with jubilant rejoicing then with the deep satisfaction of being right about the incompatibility of Jewish and gentile culture. Gay, by contrast, is pained when he finds an anti-Semitic letter by Theodor Fontane, one of Germany's finest novelists who had publicly preached assimilation and had as many Jewish as gentile friends. As a humanitarian and a rationalist, he is happy to find that "the old, controversial love affair between Jews and Germans [should it not rather read: Germany?] had not been wholly one-sided and pathetic." He confesses that "obsessed for years with hatred and thoughts of revenge . . . [I wrested] from my experience a more discriminating attitude, not forgiving and forgetting but of recognizing that there were, and are, several Germanys." He does not solve the riddle of German history but remains in the stance of ambiguity.

From this position Gay can strike out at both those Germans who try to forget and be forgiven, and at those non-Germans who try to perpetuate the race war. Mr. Cuddihy seems unable to see the difference between Auschwitz (where people were murdered summarily without even a charge of guilt) and the trial of Angela Davis (who after all was acquitted). *Quod licet Jovi* . . . when James Baldwin says such things one understands that a man who lives without a protective skin has reached for a strong metaphor; when an Irish-American professor at the City University of New York dismisses a rejoinder to that hyperbole as a mere "status struggle between two subcultures," one wonders about both his qualification to write about minority affairs and his intention in selecting his subject. He has been answered indirectly but effectively by Peter Gay in a polemic with Ernst Nolte, a German metahistorian who has written about "fascism as a world phenomenon" (*Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche*; the title under which the book has been published in English, *Three Faces of Fascism*, is misleading), and more recently on *Germany and the Cold War*. Nolte tries, according to Gay, "while acknowledging the Nazi crimes to humanize them" by a method Gay calls "comparative trivialization."

As an example, Nolte calls the war in Vietnam "nothing less than a crueller version of Auschwitz" (*Germany and the Cold War*). Gay answers: "By likening the two events Nolte . . . either employs Auschwitz and Vietnam as metaphors for modern wickedness, or they stand in his mind as real events. If the first, he demonstrates the damage metaphors can do. If the second . . . there is a world of difference between a calculated policy of mass extermination and the ill-conceived, persistent, often callous prosecution of a foreign war. . . ."

Without making such distinctions, one will never catch the human ambiguities in history. Obviously, the Judeo-Christian tradition, whose existence Mr. Cuddihy denies, is very much alive in Mr. Gay. □

David Bensman

Working-Class Families

WORLD OF PAIN: LIFE IN THE WORKING CLASS FAMILY, by Lillian B. Rubin. New York: Basic Books. $12.95 cloth, $4.95 paper. 268 pp.

Lillan Rubin's *World of Pain* is a moving study of working-class families, written from socialist and feminist perspectives. In sympathetic prose, Rubin conveys the frustration and anxiety that pervade the lives of the 100 men and women from Northern California whom she interviewed.

Even more clearly than Komarovsky's *Blue-Collar Marriage*, *World of Pain* demonstrates how economic hardship and insecurity lie at the heart of much of working-class life. The early years of marriage, for the people she writes about, are not filled with the joys of emotional and sexual discovery; instead, the husband's frequent joblessness and the wife's hasty withdrawal from the labor force before childbirth bring on anxieties that the marriage partners often transform into resentment of each other. As the couples mature, they find that their earnings never quite equal their dreams, their jobs do not become careers, and the tightness of the family budget limits their ability to find enjoyment in leisure-time activities.

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Trapped in economic circumstances beyond their control, Rubin's subjects survive stoically. They try not to complain or to protest their fate. What good would it do? Indeed, raising one's hopes too highly only makes for disappointment.

Marriage partners learn not to ask too much of each other. Each knows the other side is doing the best he or she can; why burden your spouse with your own dissatisfaction? Isolated by their concern for each other, husband and wife nurse their injuries; she wishing they could share their feelings more, he wondering why he can not satisfy her, and his own, standards of manliness.

Enlivening *Worlds of Pain* is the author's awareness of how family life has changed during the postwar era. Nearly 60 percent of the wives in Rubin's sample are working, and enjoy doing so, despite the fact that they continue to bear the burden of housekeeping. Though their employment is mostly part-time, pays poorly, and requires little skill or creativity, the women enjoy the opportunity that working gives them to socialize with other adults, to get out of the house, to enhance their sense of power vis-à-vis their husbands. Most would not give up their jobs if they did not need to work.

Sex is another area of change. Having learned from newspapers, magazines and movies that women are supposed to enjoy sex, these married couples behave quite differently from those Kinsey studied. They engage in oral intercourse and the women frequently have orgasms.

But Rubin gives her findings a twist; changed behavior does not always bring changed feeling. Most of the women interviewed do not enjoy sexual activity much more than their mothers did; for them, the sexual revolution merely means they must carry an added burden. The women do not appreciate their husbands' concern that they achieve orgasm; instead, they view that as another demand imposed on them.

AS THE READER may have gathered, *Worlds of Pain* is a biased book; it focuses only on one dimension of its subjects' lives. Sympathetic as Rubin is with her subjects' plight, she seems blind to the positive side of their lives. Working people do not only suffer; they can also be, and sometimes are, content, passionate, or joyful; in short, they are human beings. Moreover, they are not isolated. They live in families, often quite extended ones; belong to churches, trade unions, bowling leagues, parent-teacher associations, and informal work groups.

An important example of Rubin's bias comes in the last chapter, on the world of "leisure." Here, Rubin notes that the extended family, the married couple's parents, brothers, sisters, and cousins, have an important place in their emotional world. But that is all. The author supports her findings with none of the moving quotations that are scattered through the more negative chapters.

Rubin's is a common error. Komarovsky, Sennett and Cobb, and many other scholars who have studied working-class people end up strongly impressed with their "injuries," their lack of individuation, of self-confidence, of expressiveness, of ambition. No matter how sympathetic the scholars may be, they seem invariably to find their subjects inferior to upper-middle-class people.

I do not mean to reintroduce proletarian chauvinism. Of course, material deprivation and insecurity do inflict heavy costs; if not, why would one strive to abolish them? But culture—the subject of Rubin's book—is a collective response to material conditions. Working-class culture, as William Kornblum documented in *Blue Collar Community,* provides its bearers with means to cope with and sometimes overcomes their burdens. If limited opportunities mean ambition, and individuality must be attenuated, at least there is mutual consideration and sharing. Such sharing not only makes it possible to endure severe hardships, it also sometimes makes it possible for working people to gain power collectively. It might be worth pondering the differential effectiveness of the autoworkers' union and the college professors'.

I only realized how serious Rubin's bias is when I discussed this book with my students, most of them black women who work for the City of New York in clerical capacities. They rejected this portrait of working-class life; it even made them angry.

That reaction seems healthy to me. When middle-class people plead for the working-class, no matter how eloquently, there lurks a danger that sympathy will turn to contempt, that advocacy will turn to manipulation. If Rubin does not see her subjects as strong people, how does she expect them to struggle to improve their conditions? If they do not do so, who does she think will do it for them?

Such comments may seem harsh. I made them with reservations, for I believe, *Worlds of Pain* is, in many respects, a fine book. Young middle-class students would undoubtedly gain much from reading it; it would make them experience another America, one that is far too removed from their eye and consciousness. But there *is* a danger here. □

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Robert Lekachman

Veblen Reconsidered

THE BARD OF SAVAGERY: THORSTEIN VEBLEN AND MODERN SOCIAL THEORY, by John P. Diggins. New York: Seabury Press. 257 pp. $14.95.

Among fellow economists, Veblen's reputation over the years has ranged from low to ambiguous. A few years before his death in 1929, he rejected nomination for president of the American Economic Association on the ground that the recognition came insultingly late. During his professional career, neoclassical economics of the variety exemplified by Veblen's Carleton College teacher John Bates Clark dominated departments of economics in reputable institutions of higher learning. For the vast majority of economists immersed in unhistorical mechanistic analysis of the rules of equilibrium in competitive markets, Veblen's unique blend of anthropology, sociology, instinct psychology, social criticism, and polysyllabic irony seemed less infuriating than simply irrelevant. His most gifted student, Wesley Clair Mitchell, drifted away from social speculation into heavily statistical analysis of business-cycle phenomena. *His* most gifted student, Arthur F. Burns, turned into a Republican functionary and apologist for the status quo. Although some economists still label themselves institutionalists and the Association for Evolutionary Economics has for more than a decade published *The Journal of Economic Issues*, faintly Veblenian in tone, Veblen occupies no place in graduate-school curricula. A student can readily earn a doctorate without reading a line of *The Theory of Business Enterprise*. Aside from John Kenneth Galbraith and a few other dissident souls, few living economists of note echo Veblen's concern with aspects of human behavior, less superficial than the latest data from the Department of Commerce and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

At the hands of sociologists and literary types, Veblen has fared considerably better. In his interpretation of modern Germany, Ralf Dahrendorf has drawn substantially upon the Veblen of *Imperial Germany and the Industrial Revolution*. Barrington Moore cites Veblen in the course of his continued meditation upon the origins of injustice. Robert Merton has credited Veblen with anticipation of his own crucial distinction between latent and manifest functions. From the publication of *The Theory of the Leisure Class* in 1899, Veblen has teased literary imaginations. William Dean Howells's glowing review in the *Atlantic Monthly* guaranteed a wide public for Veblen's mordant dissection of the social mores of the Guilded Age, even though Howells failed to identify the deeply subversive nature of Veblen's demonstration of the impermanence of business society. John Dos Passos's trilogy *USA: The Big Money* was inspired by Veblen. In his *On Native Grounds*, the young Alfred Kazin in 1942 included an admiring portrait of Veblen.

From time to time, Veblen is rediscovered, occasionally by economists as a business-cycle theorist, anticipator of Galbraith's technostructure, or critic of both classical and Marxist economics, rather more frequently by non-economists as an early student of fascism, moral critic of business enterprise, feminist unjustly neglected by the women's movement, biting critic of universities, and prophet of a higher quality of human experience than capitalism is capable of offering.

NOW JOHN DIGGINS has written a useful but seriously flawed assessment of Veblen's life and work. The defects are partly stylistic. Veblen would have appreciated the irony of this monograph by a scholar with a bad ear for language and the linguistic devices in which Veblen gloried. Matters are not helped by an inordinate number of typographical lapses and occasional inaccuracies like the use of "strata" as a singular noun. Moreover, Diggins is an inaccurate guide to Marx, Keynes, and the marginalists. He would have been well-advised to excise speculation about the connections between Veblen's personality and his opinions. No doubt, as David Riesman speculated in his psychiatric reinterpretation of Veblen, the master's friends were he and they alive would urge him to consult a psychoanalyst. The point is as irrelevant as Diggins's labored effort to connect Veblen's academic vicissitudes at Chicago, Stanford, and Missouri with his corrosive analysis of the conduct of universities by businessmen. Diggins's uncertainty as a biographer is exemplified by a paragraph in which he both terms Veblen a philanderer and concedes that he was the passive party in the many affairs with women that scandalized contemporaries in colleges where smoking was ground for expulsion and professors of mathematics opened classes with prayer. Even in

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hands more adroit than Diggins's, psychohistory is a tricky genre.

Nevertheless, used with discretion, *The Bard of Savagery* has its points. Diggins carefully, alas even laboriously, compares Veblen as analyst of capitalism with Marx and Weber and in so doing identifies some of the limitations of all three modes of analysis. His chapter on women similarly distinguishes Veblen's anthropological interpretation of the "barbarian" status of the female sex from John Stuart Mill's explanation of *The Subjection of Women* as one more prime example of oppression, and Engels's assimilation of sexual relations to his categories of property and ownership. On the whole, Diggins's account of Veblen's leading notions is both judicious and accurate.

Possibly the book's most substantial contribution is the opportunity it offers to readers to sort out for themselves the still relevant aspects of Veblen. Diggins reminds me that Veblen's distinction between pecuniary employment and biologically serviceable activities, which reflect the parental bent, and the instincts of workmanship and idle curiosity remains as powerful a mode of organizing economic experience as the market models preferred in standard economics. This distinction inspired at least two social critics of major stature, Lewis Mumford and Clarence Ayres. It has at least touched the work of David Riesman, Daniel Bell, and John Kenneth Galbraith.

For the rest Veblen's anthropology, his inordinate affection for instinct psychology, his confidence in engineers as revolutionaries, and his uncritical Darwinism are either outmoded or misplaced. Yet, once read, Veblen is unlikely to be permanently forgotten. The man, for one thing, was so delightfully nasty. Here is a vintage passage from *The Theory of Business Enterprise* on the armed services:

> With the complement of archaic virtues that invests these adepts there is also associated a fair complement of those more elemental vices that are growing obsolete in the peaceable civilized communities. Such debaucheries, extravagances of cruelty, and general superfluity of naughtiness as are nameless or impossible in civil life are blameless matters of course in the service. In the nature of the case they are inseparable from the service. The service commonly leaves the veterans physical, intellectual, and moral invalids. . . . But these less handsome concomitants of the service should scarcely be made a point of reproach to those brave men whose devotion to the flag and the business interests has led them by the paths of disease and depravity. Nor are the accumulated vices to be lightly condemned, since their weight also falls on the conservative side; being archaic and authenticated, their cultural bearing is, on the whole, salutary.

Veblen will endure, I suspect, because he appeals to the deep vein of subversion buried in the souls of all but the most solemn. Who of us at some solemn faculty or corporate conclave has not yearned to cry Fraud, or Stuffed Shirt? Although it is a pity that Diggins is too humorless a chap to derive entertainment from his subject, his book is a sufficient reason to look again into Veblen. □

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In the Magazines

"The Other Economy: America's Working Poor," by Gus Tyler. New York: NEW LEADER, a biweekly, May 8, 1978 (Special Issue), 75¢.

"The Future That Never Was," by Daniel Bell. New York: PUBLIC INTEREST, a quarterly, Spring 1978, $3.00.

"The Rural Challenge," edited by Romesh Thapar. New Delhi: SEMINAR, a monthly (P.O.B. 338, New Delhi, India), July 1978 (Special Issue), $10.00 per year.

I

In May the *New Leader* published a whole issue devoted to a superb study by Gus Tyler, vice-president of the ILGWU, entitled "The Other Economy: America's Working Poor." In his opening paragraphs Tyler presents his thesis:

> The United States has two economies: One, incarnated in colossal corporations such as General Motors, du Pont, AT&T, IBM, Gulf and Western, and Exxon, is highly visible; the other, embodied in comparatively minuscule operations such as marginal manufacturing, local retailing and individual contracting, is virtually invisible as it struggles to stay alive in the shadow of its celebrated sibling.
>
> The first is rich, large-scale, pays good wages, and controls its markets; the second is poor, small-scale, pays low wages, and is controlled by its markets. The first is capital-intensive, oligopolistic, and has access to ready financing; the second is labor-intensive, competitive and at the mercy of the money lenders. The first is generally depicted as the American Economy; the second generally goes unnoted, even unnoticed, although this Other Economy embraces well over 90 percent of all enterprises and employs a majority of the wage and salaried people in the private sector.

Tyler's thesis is a radical one—bolstered by a striking array of statistical evidence—that the real roots of poverty in America lie in the "Other Economy," that 75 percent of our people derive little or no benefit from our affluent society, that while America is a "land of plenty" its national income distribution is so lopsided as to deny most people the fruits of our income as a nation and, finally, that our ". . . economic elite enjoys an obscenely disproportionate portion of total national income because it *owns* [author's emphasis] America—especially the great producing, distributing and financial corporations that dominate the country's economy."

Now these assertions have become familiar to us since the New Deal '30s. But what is new about Tyler's study is his stress on the "Other Economy" and the link between this and the social problem of America's millions of working poor. Tyler then moves on to a lengthy section entitled "The War Against Poverty Revisited." Examining the question of unemployment Tyler concludes, contrary to popular belief, that it is neither the sole nor even the major cause of poverty. Even accepting the obvious enormity of the unemployment problem, "the prime reasons for poverty are low pay and unsteady work." Of course, it has been the tendency of contemporary social analysts to widen the definition of what is meant by unemployment to include irregular work periods and intermittent employment. Further, by redefining the government's notion of poverty to include families earning only 25 percent more than the official poor (or an annual income of $6,500 for a family of four in 1976), Tyler points out that the number living in poverty jumps from 25 million to 35.5 million, and he records an increase of 43.6 percent! So much for the "success" of the war on poverty!

The next section of "The Other Economy" is a down-to-earth study of "The Non-Affluent Americans," their living standards, income distribution in relation to poverty cutoff, etc. Conclusion? A majority of Americans is denied "the airs of affluence," and balancing the budget is a strain for 75 percent of our families despite the frequent shift to more than one income per family. The effect of social reform, trade unionism, transfer payments, changes to a more progressive income tax, etc. has been minimal on income distribution. This leads directly to the next section on "Maldistribution of Income and Wealth." The conclusion that maldistribution of income and wealth between the property-owning class and the working mass is echoed as well in the maldistribution of wages and salaries is verified by the detailed statistical data presented by Tyler; but for him this situation arises basically out of the clash between the two economies.

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Tyler's concluding section ("Scenarios for a Solution") is concerned with ways of equalizing power between the two economic sectors he has described. He leans toward solutions presented by John Kenneth Galbraith, which aim at organizing and bringing order into the so-called Other Economy through setting fixed prices, a major increase in the minimum wage, state credits, etc. In the several scenarios presented that have the objective of closing the gap between the two economies there is no effort to touch upon the complex political and ideological questions that would inevitably be raised. In any case, Tyler's main objective is to focus attention on the existence of what he calls "the duality of our economy," which, to him, is the root evil of our capitalist society.

II

THE SPRING ISSUE of the *Public Interest* contains the first section of a long, two-part essay by Daniel Bell, "The Future that Never Was," which attempts to locate England's position in the world today. The second part, to appear in the Summer 1978 Issue, will examine the changes in Britain's social, occupational, and political structures. The two sections together promise to form the most searching and informative study of England produced in recent years. The first part is written with grace and a good deal of humor—the pages on Bell's family run-ins with English bureaucrats and their efforts to stave off family starvation on a Bank-holiday weekend are especially amusing. Postwar England, states Bell, underwent two "social revolutions." The establishment of a welfare state by the Attlee Labour government starting in 1945, and the consumer boom of the 1960s. But inflation and poor economic performance in the last few years have hastened the downward slide of the British economy and brought about a long period of stagnation. The question is put sharply by the author: "Have the institutional structures of British society become so encrusted, and the economic deficits (in capital stock, plant equipment, and skills) so great, that *no* government, socialist or Tory, can reverse the situation?" In probing this major issue, Bell writes perhaps the most interesting pages of his long essay as he examines Marx's approach to English capitalism.

> . . . the singular fact is that while England was the *first* country to industrialize, it never became a *full* industrial nation. While England became a middle-class country, it never became a *bourgeois* society in the terms that Marx described. . . . And although Marx wrote about the English industrial *economy* in *Capital,* in the 35 years he lived in Britain . . . he never looked out of his window at English *society.* [All author's emphasis.]

There is a great deal more in this provocative essay that will fascinate anyone who has visited England or knows something of its history and economic development.

III

FINALLY, A MAGAZINE largely unknown in this country but highly reputed in India, where it appears each month, ought to be mentioned. *Seminar,* published in New Delhi, handles one issue at a time. The July 1978 Issue is devoted to the Indian countryside and "The Rural Challenge," and edited by Romesh Thapar. In view of the fact that the new Janata government of India is pledged to organize a massive shift of priorities away from heavy industry and to the countryside, this issue is of major importance. For the current annual budget of the country has begun this shift in practice. In its opening statement *Seminar* states the problem in blunt terms:

> The village today is synonymous with open drains lined with shit, clouded over with flies that can't choose between the drains and the mounds of open sweetmeats, ill ventilated homes, naked children, their eyes misty with the dust and the sand, and all this juxtaposed with nylon and bicycles and bell-bottomed trousers, with schools where the rural young are speedily being taught to forget the skills of their fathers. It is a kind of wayward prosperity amidst the dirt—for it's dirt all the way, particularly in the whole of the northern belt where prosperity entered the village with the Green Revolution.

The five or six essays that follow—all competent, scholarly, and documented—take up the complex questions of rural economy and technology, touching upon such issues as land tenure and holdings, facilities, pricing systems, marketing, cooperatives, rural planning, and the condition of the mass of landless laborers. One essay this reader found especially fascinating is entitled "Mud Architecture"—a study of indigenous village architecture in which mud constitutes the major building component. Accompanied by drawings, this article reveals "the major uses of mud in buildings as structural material in walls and foundations, roofing materials, insulation as ceiling and curtain walls, plaster, flooring materials, and binding/cementing material." Whether use of mud is the answer to the well-known housing problem of India's 500,000 villages is a question beyond our immediate competence.

S. P. □

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LETTERS

On Socialist Thought

Editors:

Dissent is to be commended for publishing Robert Heilbroner's essay and the critical responses to it. The essay and the various responses go to the heart of some of the most troubling aspects of the socialist tradition. It seems to me, however, that the whole discussion suffers from a certain abstractness that points to the need for a greater specificity about just what we mean when we speak of "democratic socialism."

The democratic socialist tradition, it seems to me, has three great areas of strength and one great area of weakness. The merit of Heilbroner's essay is that it forces us to face this weakness. The tradition is quite strong when it comes to articulating a *critique* of the existing capitalist social order, and it is equally strong when it comes to inspiring us with an alternative *vision* of society. A third area of relative strength is the tradition's ability to generate realistic *short-term strategies* for the immediate future, but the current unreconciled division of socialist efforts between a "full employment" and an "antinuclear" strategy suggests that this strength will remain vitiated in the United States until, in one way or another, we are able to develop a unified democratic socialist party.

The great weakness, however—and I find this reflected both in the essay and in the responses—is the failure to specify in any significant detail just what kinds of *structures* we have in mind that will allow us to translate the socialist vision into democratic reality. In short, we have a devastating critique, an inspiring vision, and short-term democratic strategies, but we do not have an articulated concept of the structures of democratic socialism—the structures ensuring that socialism indeed turns out to be as democratic as we desire and hope.

The need for such an articulated concept is urgent for precisely the reasons Heilbroner indicates—"no one has yet observed this socialism in reality," the "socialisms" we have observed have all been authoritarian; structural reasons (notably, the planning mechanism) can be given for this, and history has a way of turning against even the best of our efforts and expectations. A detailed, articulated concept would be a translation of, not a substitution for, the vision, but it would replace the vision as the immediate or middle-range goal of the strategies. Such a detailed concept would need to be revised and debated as we went along, but it would serve a salutary function. It would enable us to show just how, with a greater plausibility than is now possible, a socialist society could indeed be kept under democratic control and realize democratic values.

With the partial exception of Bogdan Denitch's response, neither Heilbroner's essay nor the various critiques approach the kind of articulated concept that I think is necessary. This is why I would like to call attention to the recent work of Prof. Leland Stauber of Southern Illinois University. Regardless of what one may think about the fine points of Stauber's proposals—and I suspect that Prof. Charles E. Lindblom may be right when he suggests that they are "not radical enough"—the fact remains that Stauber's work on "market socialism" moves away from the endemic level of abstraction that plagues the discussion and toward the necessary specificity. Stauber is trying to show in laudable detail how the capitalist class could be eliminated while various aspects of the market might be retained under socialism without becoming "the main order-bestowing system" that Heilbroner worries about. He is trying to give a detailed structural account of how socialism, contrary to Heilbroner, could become more than "a movement *within* welfare capitalism" while still retaining some significant reliance on a market mechanism. In short, he is working toward that "sober estimation of socialism" that Heilbroner calls for, by articulating a structural mix of market and planning mechanisms that would ensure that socialism as socialism could indeed remain democratic.

Stauber's work is accessible in three places: his forthcoming book, *Market Socialism and the Problems of Control; A Reappraisal of Practical Experience;* "A Proposal for a Democratic Market Economy," *Journal of Comparative Economics,* September 1977; and a recent three-part series in *In These Times* (May 3-9, 10-16, and 17-23, 1978).

GEORGE HUNSINGER
New Haven □

"Intellectuals on Tap"

Editors:

There are plenty of arguments socialists can use to oppose the ideas Mr. Kristol expressed in his recent book, *Two Cheers for Capitalism.* Lewis Coser has done an admirable job of enumerating them. However, Mr. Kristol's colleagues in the business world and those of the "New Class" whose ideologies have not yet become socialistic ought to view *Two Cheers for Capitalism* with an even greater dread than the socialists. If Mr. Kristol's program for managing political thought in this country were to come about, I'm afraid it would undermine the philosophical foundations of the capitalist system he so cherishes.

For years, we in this country have been nurtured on the myth that freedom in politics must be accompanied by freedom in economics. The freedoms of thought, speech, religion, and all the other freedoms in the Bill of Rights are to be equated with the freedom to consume. Capitalism, we are told, is the logical outgrowth of a Democratic nation (or is it the other way around?).

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By limiting intellectual freedoms, aren't capitalists like Mr. Kristol attempting to destroy their own legitimacy, that the existence of capitalism requires a free society? Won't the enactment of Mr. Kristol's proposed management of thought itself be, in his own words, "inimical to corporate survival"?

In the private sector, we have witnessed an erosion of our economic freedom to consume through cartel, monopoly, and market-sharing arrangements. It seems Mr. Kristol is really advocating a corresponding erosion of our freedoms of thought and speech. Does the management of markets and profits in our economy inevitably lead to the management and control of thought? This, I believe, is the major question raised by Mr. Kristol's work.

If capitalists are, as Lewis Coser tells us, "oblivious to their true interests," it seems businessmen, in trying to manage thought in this country, run the risk of working at cross purposes. The only way to eliminate this from happening is to "play" to the most reactionary of business organizations and ideas . . . to the lowest common denominator of business thought. This would create a "monolithic" free-enterprise mentality, to match the mythical "monolithic" Communism that we have been led to fear.

The intellectual management of this country under Mr. Kristol's plan, then, would not only eliminate socialist ideas from public debate but could also lead to narrow and inflexible definitions of the prevailing capitalist viewpoint. We might end up with the kind of repression among intellectuals that terrorists throughout the world tell us breeds violent revolution.

Socialists and members of the "New Class" alike should oppose any plan for intellectual management, for this would erode capitalism as we know it in favor of a more totalitarian order and make a gradual social democratic evolvement that much more difficult.

TODD LARMER
Harrisburg, Pa. □

German Resistance, 1933—45

Editors:

Henry Pachter's review of my book, *The History of the German Resistance* 1933-1945 (*Dissent,* Summer 1977), stressed two points: that resistance to Hitler was suspect if it began late and was triggered by a realization of the dangers for Germany caused by Hitler's policies; and, that resistance to Hitler was suspect insofar as it lacked mass support. Those Resistance groups that were conservative are suspected of having been reactionary, primarily interested in preserving an old class structure and undemocratic class privileges, and in general the might of the German Reich, including Hitler's conquests. Mr. Pachter further maintained that I "cannot explain what turned these former supporters of Hitler into enemies," and that therefore I "also cannot explain why their coup had to fail." He then suggests that "What there was must be characterized as an attempt to save as much as possible, not of honor but of territory." It was a "desperate last resort."

This is a slander of the men and women who lost their lives by slow strangulation on thin ropes slung over meathooks, on Hitler's specific orders, for having dared to resist and ultimately to overthrow him, and for having plotted against his evil regime for many years, as the Gestapo investigations showed. Since Mr. Pachter read my book he must be aware of what I think turned these men and women, and some of Hitler's former supporters, into enemies: the threat of world war, of the destruction of Germany, of Europe, of civilization. The program of destruction begun against the Jews in 1939 and 1941-42 could not have been foreseen before the war; but numerous of those later hanged for resisting cited the massacres of Jews as primary motivation for their resistance when they were interrogated by the Gestapo. Some of those in the Resistance transcended nationally oriented patriotism and acted in the interests of mankind by working for the defeat of their own country.

Helmuth James von Moltke, a high-ranking jurist in *OKW/Amt Ausland*'s international-law section, wrote to a friend in England, Lionel Curtis, in 1942 (p. 597 in my book): "We hope that you will realize that we are ready to help you win both the war and peace." Oster, Bonhoeffer, and others acted in the same way, not as a "desperate last resort," but ever since 1933, and before the war as well as during the war, regardless of whether it was going well for Hitler or not. Ernst Niekisch, Ewald von Kleist-Schmenzin, Fabian von Schlabrendorff, Dr. Joseph Römer, Nikolaus von Halem, and many others belong in this category. Mr. Pachter defeats his own line of argument by contemptuously categorizing latecomers to the Resistance as "people who had first served Hitler." For many resisters, early ones and later ones, served him throughout, engaging in resistance while they served him, and these include such unimpeachable left-wingers as Harro Schulze-Boysen and Dr. Arvid Harnack, who worked in high government positions in the Air Ministry and Economics Ministry, respectively, until late in the war, and Dr. Robert Havemann who saved his life with "war-important" scientific work while imprisoned in Brandenburg Penitentiary for his Communist underground activities.

Mr. Pachter contends that the "earlier resistance [of the labor movement] can claim that it did not wait to denounce Hitler until defeat stared Germany in the face, and it was not conducted by people who had first served Hitler as price commissars, staff officers, financial advisers, and ideologists." The intolerant implication is that early resistance was good, no matter how prejudiced and unthinking, whereas conversion was self-serving and morally suspect. In point of fact, neither the "labor

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movement" nor the later "officers' revolt" made any systematic or organized attempt at overthrowing Hitler before 1938, i.e., before the war and in order to *prevent* the outbreak of war, and the "labor movement" never attempted it after 1938—except in cooperation with the "officers' revolt," because they understood that the military alone had the potential to carry it off. Mr. Pachter reproaches me for being "almost totally silent about the underground work of the labor movement that preceded the officers' revolt." It would be tiresome to cite all the references to the labor movement throughout my book, and my book is available and so can be its own witness; if Mr. Pachter had looked up in the index such words as "Communist," "Socialist," etc., he would have come upon at least 30 references in each case; there is also an entire chapter on the plans of the Socialists; and the contacts between "labor movement" and "officers' revolt" are documented throughout.

Mr. Pachter finds it "confusing" that "Claus von Stauffenberg, who carried the bomb into Hitler's bunker, had marched with the Nazi flag at a time when his officers' oath pledged him to defend the flag of the Republic." If Mr. Pachter meant what he said literally, he must know, in the first instance, that German officers did not take oaths to defend any flag, but pledged allegiance to the *Reich's* Constitution, to the *Reich's* legal institutions, to the *Reich's* President, and to their superior officers (*Reichsgesetzblatt* 1919, p. 1419).This oath was modified in December 1933 to read "people and fatherland" instead of "Constitution," and it left out the President (*Reichsgesetzblatt* I, 1933, p. 1017); after the death of President Hindenburg in August 1934, all soldiers had to swear personal allegiance to the *Führer,* Adolf Hitler (*Reichsgesetzblatt* I, 1934, p. 785). Second, Claus von Stauffenberg "marched with the Nazi flag" like every other soldier (including First Lieutenant Harro Schulze-Boysen and Lieutenant-Colonel Vincenz Müller, who are Communist heroes), without committing any breach of loyalty, after a presidential decree of March 12, 1933, had given the new flag official status (*Reichsgesetzblatt* I, 1933, p. 103); thus again, if Mr. Pachter's words were intended to have a more general meaning, the implied accusation does not stand—unless, of course, the intention is to reproach resisters for breaking their oaths as soldiers or government officials. Beyond these aspects, which had to be looked at because Mr. Pachter's reference is not clear, I have refuted in my book (p. 317) the legends about a particular "march" of Claus von Stauffenberg "with the Nazi flag."

Dr. Goerdeler receives somewhat similar treatment from Mr. Pachter: Dr. Goerdeler "had resigned from his post as mayor of Leipzig when the Storm Troopers removed a statue of Felix Mendelssohn from a public square [in Leipzig]; nevertheless, after Hitler's bloody coup of June 30, 1934 (the so-called Roehm revolt), Goerdeler accepted the post of price commissar." The reverse order is correct: the statue incident occurred after Goerdeler had been price commissar (incidentally, not a post that involved him in any crimes of the regime), he was relieved of his duties in this capacity on June 1, 1935, and the statue incident and Goerdeler's resulting resignation occured in 1937.

I agree that there was no large popular movement against Hitler's regime after 1933, and I said so many times in my book. The men of July 20, 1944 did not have any masses behind them—nor did the Socialists and Communists. The dramatic efforts to establish cooperation with the Communist underground, particularly on June 22 and July 4, 1944 (more fully covered in my book than anywhere else, so far as I know), when the Socialists Dr. Leber and Dr. Reichwein (not Leuschner, as Mr. Pachter implies) met with Saefkow and Jacob of the underground Central Committee of the German Communist party, showed that the Socialist and Communists were by force of circumstances just as isolated from the masses as the conservative groups. This might tell one something about life in a dictatorship. Who has the moral right to criticize the dissidents in Soviet Russia for not carrying the masses along with them?

Mr. Pachter might have avoided giving the impression that all those involved in the July 20, 1944 plot had the same concepts for the time after the overthrow of Hitler. It is true that Goerdeler hoped for a long time to keep intact the German frontiers of 1938, perhaps wider ones; but Beck, Moltke, Maass, Dr. Berthold von Stauffenberg (Claus's brother), to mention only a few, had no illusions about Germany's future frontiers, or about the certainty of military occupation by Allied troops. There was no "desperate last resort," but a fully understood self-sacrifice. As Dr. Berthold von Stauffenberg put it on July 14, 1944: "The worst thing is knowing that we cannot succeed and yet that we have to do it, for our country and our children."

PETER HOFFMANN
Montreal

HENRY PACHTER REPLIES:

(1) I said: "I do not deny that the conspirators of 1944 were idealists in their own way, or that their motives were honest." I stated: "They proved that at least not every German was prepared to march and die with Hitler." Nor do I disagree with Peter Hoffmann's claim that "the threat of war, of the destruction of Germany . . . turned these men . . . Hitler's former supporters into enemies." Indeed, I said: "The officers and diplomats who had helped Hitler prepare his war were honestly amazed and shaken when they found out that he actually wanted war." But Professor Hoffmann himself admits (p. 172 of his book) that General Oster acted to save Germany from defeat and did not consider himself a traitor.

(2) I asked why these people helped Hitler in the first place. Hoffmann admits (pp. 317 and 319) that Stauffenberg hailed both Hitler's political and military

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victories; he and the others rejoiced in the fall of the Republic, ignored Hitler's anti-Semitic ravings, and (never mind whether my calendar needs a minor correction) served him enthusiastically as long as *he* tolerated *them*. I asked why they waited until they were fired or until the disaster was upon them. My answer was: The politics of the aristocratic, conservative, military, and administrative opposition were determined by their narrow class outlook. Professor Hoffmann still seems to think that these people were merely mistaken about Hitler's character. He put only Jews, Socialists, and Communists into the concentration camps.

(3) I have charged that Professor Hoffmann either does not know or does not report accurately the various underground movements on the left. I can assure him that before writing my review I checked all his 30 references to Communists and Socialists. They include references to Stalin, to the workers' parties' pre-Hitler stand, but also to "Prussian Socialism," to Soviet spy organizations, and other irrelevant matter, and, of course, to Leber's contacts with Stauffenberg's and Moltke's circles—which had no organizational backing—but precisely not to the activities of the underground groups of the various workers' parties, their organization, their papers, their personnel.

(4) I knew Harro Schulze-Boysen. To call him "an unimpeachable left-winger" is strange; he was a confused national-bolshevist who had no contact with the labor movement. Dr. Havemann, who surfaces in Professor Hoffmann's letter, is not in his book—and that was precisely what I objected to. To name him, or the saintly Bonhoeffer, in one breath with Goerdeler, Hitler's Price Commissar, or with the ex-Free Corps leader Beppo Roemer, whose indiscreet conduct delivered a hundred Communists to the Gestapo, is almost an insult.

(5) It is true that Beck and Moltke did not think they could save anything. But it is also true that Moltke declined to take part in the coup, and that many other officers refused to violate the oath they had sworn to Hitler. Here is precisely the riddle of the 20th of July, 1944, if seen as a conspiracy of conservative officers and high civil servants: their code of honor permitted them to see that they had wrought dishonor; but they could restore their honor only by risking to bring the dishonor of treason upon themselves. That some—like Oster, Stauffenberg, Gisevius, Canaris, Trott, Kleist, and many others—took this desperate step will remain a testimony to the fact that even in a country's deepest degradation some men of courage are capable of redeeming action. But to recognize this does not mean that those tragic heroes are above political criticism.

(6) I had no intention to "slander" the conspirators, nor did I say anywhere that they are "suspect." On the contrary, Professor Hoffmann must know that I defended them (and him) against a diatribe by Kenneth Galbraith in the *New York Review of Books*. I think my criticism of both the men of the July 20 conspiracy and of professor Hoffmann's attitude to them springs from an intrinsic problem, not from prejudice or animosity. □

On McCarthyism in West Germany

Editors:

Max Miller's reply, in your Summer Issue, to "McCarthyism in the German Civil Service," in the Winter 1978 Issue, which I co-authored with Monica Jacobs, betrays ignorance of the current situation in the Federal Republic as well as that of the United States in the McCarthy era. Before responding to the specific problems with his analysis, however, a comment is required on the tactic employed at the outset of his discussion: questioning the character of those who write critically of West Germany without mention of the authoritarianism in the East.

Abuses of democratic rights in East Germany were not referred to in the *Dissent* article for several reasons. First, the piece was not about East Germany. Second, each German state blames its own violations of human rights on the "need" to protect its people from the "other" Germany's subversion, rather than its own shortcomings. Third, the West's greater *political* democracy should not exempt it from needed criticism. It is the duty of democratic socialists to criticize *any* society where violations of their principles occur. I have criticized socialist societies and will continue to do so. However, it is also necessary to present to different audiences information and analyses they have not been exposed to, rather than just provide comforting reinforcement of long-held beliefs about the world. *Dissent* readers hardly need to learn about the existence of repression in East Germany. That is *all* most probably know about this country.

Regarding the dispute on the *Berufsverbot* ("job-ban") policy, Mr. Miller's estimate of the number of its victims is inaccurate. He refers to 328 rejected civil-service applicants out of 450,000 in 18 months. Berufsverbot, which is based on the Hamburg (or Radical) Decree of January 1972, has been in operation *6½ years!*

It is not only the failure to cover the entire period of repression that limits the value of official data. The figure of 328 for the shorter period has itself been disputed. It entirely excludes data from West Berlin. Moreover, there is evidence that official data from individual states used to produce the number 328 do not correspond to the number of cases reported by *victims* in those jurisdictions. For example, the official data claim only 29 rejected applicants in the state of Hesse (which has a population of 5.5 million). The teachers' union of Giessen-Wetzlar (population 100,000) in Hesse has received the names of 32 victims among its own membership! Is it possible all *Berufsverbot* cases in the entire state (and more!) come from one small area?

Another problem with the data is that the 328 official cases only include those definitively denied civil-service jobs and fail to count those who have appeals pending or have been reinstated. Appeals and reinstatement (when and if it occurs) often take years. Frequently a reinstated

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applicant or job holder must be satisfied with a job inferior to the one they had or sought. Beate Bongard, the dismissed teacher I assume Mr. Miller is referring to, won reinstatement only after four court cases. Moreover, she could not return to a tenured position she lost, but to an untenured job with lower pay and lower benefits. It is such weaknesses of the official data that have led to widespread skepticism and prompted fact-gathering committees to assess victimization at about 4,000 persons over the entire period since *Berufsverbot* has been instituted.

Perhaps Mr. Miller and other readers might still find even 4,000 victims not comparable to the toll under America's McCarthyism. Yet, to see the similarity between the two epochs one must realize that McCarthyism in America probably did not result in more than 5,000 dismissals of public-sector employees in a nation having *three* times the population of the Federal Republic (Ralph Brown, *Loyalty and Security*, 1958, pp. 487-488).

The statistics of McCarthyist repression underline the limitations of using victimization rates as the prime measure of the societal consequences of an era of loyalty probes. McCarthyism's impact was not only felt by those who lost jobs, but by the far greater number who lived in fear or were silenced by self-censorship.

In West Germany a similar process is occurring. For example, the German head of Amnesty International wrote to President Walter Scheel stating the organization was having difficulty getting German citizens to sign petitions in its campaign for the abolition of torture in the world. The effect of the *Berufsverbot* policy on students is more complex. The policy does not prohibit student activism. Yet, students are aware of the risks of signing petitions and joining groups that are clearly watched by the security police, even if the groups are perfectly legal. Many have been astonished to find, when graduating and seeking employment, that innocuous activities have been held against them. This experience helps silence others.

As for Marxist professors, many of them would not be employed today if they did not gain tenure in a more tranquil era. A university strike in Berlin in 1976 was necessary to assure at least the temporary reappointment of two nontenured professors. Even tenured faculty experience considerable insecurity. In Lower Saxony, tenured professors had to sign a specially designed loyalty oath or risk their jobs when they defended freedom of speech for a student who had written a controversial article on terrorism. And this despite the fact courts ruled the article in question was a clear rejection of terrorism.

Mr. Miller does seem to acknowledge that occasional procedural abuses have occurred in civil-service employment decisions. But he prefers to believe they are prevalent only in states ruled by conservatives. This myth, that only the right conducts witch-hunts, was put to rest in the May 22, 1978 *Spiegel*, the liberal newsmagazine comparable to *Newsweek*. It stated in an article devoted to the Social Democrats' handling of the Radicals Decree, "The embarrassing inquisition of politically undesirable candidates is in no way a peculiarity of CDU (Christian Democratic Union) governed states. In practice, almost all states use the same procedures, no matter which party rules." The same article denies that Constitutional Court rulings of 1975 or the SPD guidelines of 1976, designed to promote some elements of due process in *Berufsverbot* hearings, were effective in curbing violations of civil rights.

MILTON MANKOFF
New York City □

To Our Contributors

- When sending manuscripts, please make sure that you do not send your only copy.
- And please also be sure to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. —The Editors

On Religion and Socialism: A Follow-Up

Editors:

I would like to inform your readers about the fate of another person whom Erazim Kohák mentioned in his article, "Religion and Socialism," in your spring issue.

Jan Šimsa, the son of the Christian martyr Jan Šimsa whom Kohák cites repeatedly, has been held in prison in Czechoslovakia since last May. True to the heritage of his father, Jan Šimsa signed Charter 77 and has been subject to persecution ever since. During a house search on May 30th he refused to surrender to a policeman a personal letter of good will written to him by Prof. Jan Potočka shortly before the latter's death. This was construed as resisting the authorities. Šimsa was arrested and held incommunicado ever since.

A postcard written by Jan Šimsa the day after his arrest was handed over to his wife two weeks later. That and the fact that the police came to get, from his wife, the medications Šimsa needs to survive suggests that he is alive.

Your readers can help by writing postcards (airmail postage 21¢) to his wife, Mrs. Milena Šimsova, Volfola 12, 6120 Brno-Pole, Czechoslovakia, letting her know that they had learned of Jan Šimsa's arrest and that they hope for his early release. Concern in the West has repeatedly saved lives of potential victims and, given the efficacy of Czechoslovak censorship, such postcards will be noted.

CHARLES BADGER, D.D. □

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A SPECIAL FEATURE

Beyond the Welfare State Part II

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Michael Harrington

What Socialists Would Do in America — If They Could

Let's pose a far-reaching question, without pretending to answer it fully. What would happen in America if we were able to make it come to pass? How would we move beyond the welfare state? What measures would be taken on the far side of liberal reform, yet well short of utopia?

These questions are not academic. In Europe today there are democratic socialist mass parties that are putting them on the political agenda. In America there is, of course, no major socialist movement, yet. But this society is more and more running up against the inherent limits of the welfare state. We can no longer live with the happy assumptions of '60s liberalism—that an endless, noninflationary growth would not only allow us to finance social justice but to profit from it as well. So, for instance, a Democratic president is told by key economic advisers that workers will have to bear the consequences of breathing cotton dust because industry "cannot afford" the cost of protecting their lungs.

In the United States, at present, the dominant reaction to such structural problems is to sound retreat. This may well strike cruelly at the poor, the minorities, women, and all other vulnerable people. But ultimately the forced march to the rear will not work. For there are limits to the ability of the nation to impose the social costs of late-capitalist production upon those least able to defend themselves.

So I baldly assert that old-fashioned reaction is not, in the long run, a feasible way of dealing with our problems. There will either be a new-fashioned reaction—sophisticated, modern, planned—or there will be a socialist alternative. It is with this thought in mind that I undertake an attempt to define a socialist policy for the (still unforeseeable) middle distance. First, I will try to outline some of the general problems raised by such an imaginative definition of the future. Then, there will be a brief sketch of that possible socialist future. And finally, I will try to relate these speculations to the immediate present, since I am convinced that projecting what should be must help us, here and now, in devising what can be.

I: Some General Problems

Capitalism is dying. It will not, however, disappear on a given day, or in a given month or even year. Its demise will take place as a historic process that could lead to democratic socialism—or to a new kind of collectivist and authoritarian society. And one of the key problems of locating socialism in this process is that it must emerge in a society that is not capitalist or socialist but something in-between, with elements of both.

Let me now hastily sketch in a few details to support the sweeping statements I have just made.

The way capitalism ends defines the terrain on which socialism becomes possible.* Present-day capitalism is more and more collectivist, that is, it increasingly makes its economic decisions politically. This happens

*In what follows, I have summarized the arguments detailed and documented in *The Twilight of Capitalism*. Readers who seek proof for my various assertions will, I hope, find it there.

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because the inherent tendencies of the system subvert the always imperfect "free markets" of an earlier age and because, in any case, those markets could not organize a system of such interdependent complexity. Thus far, this process of collectivization within capitalism has been dominated by corporate priorities, even when the collectivizers have been liberals, trade unionists, or socialists.

This last trend is not the result of a conspiracy on the right or of betrayals on the left. It is a consequence of the fact that, as Claus Offe put it, the capitalist state is not itself a capitalist. The economic and political health of the government thus becomes dependent on investment decisions made in private boardrooms. Those decisions are critical determinants of the Gross National Product, the level of employment, and indeed of the government's own revenues. The rulers of the welfare state therefore must adapt themselves to corporate priorities—"win business confidence."

Those corporate priorities center on the maximizing of profits. This, obviously, is no longer done in an entrepreneurial or "robber-baron" way. The nonowning manager has a much more sophisticated calculus and, corporate collectivist that he is, takes political and even social factors into account. Yet, even in this new guise capitalism remains dangerously and fundamentally antisocial. Capacity is expanded in good times as if there were no tomorrow—or more precisely, as if the ability of the society to consume were not limited by the very income structure that capitalist production enforces. In consequence, there are periodic crises. At the same time, the growing social costs of the system are imposed upon those least able to pay—a fact cruelly visible in the devastated cities of the Northeast and industrial Middle West. Markets are rigged with increasing expertise, which is one source of inflation in the midst of recession. Inequality persists because, under capitalism, private wealth, personal and corporate, is the main source of new investment funds.

The welfare state reinforces these trends. Since the health of the entire economy is seen to depend on the will of those who control investment, "trickle down" becomes *the* ideology of late capitalism. Thus the political representatives of the rich are now demanding—in the name of the common good—that further tax privileges should be conferred on the wealthy, while government-spending for everyone else is curtailed.

This corporate collectivism is not, however, a stable system—as anyone who has lived in the '70s can testify. The private, and antisocial, priorities that inform public action are becoming more and more destructive. The anticapitalist measures used to shore up capitalism create a crisis of legitimacy. And eventually, the contradictions of "private socialization" will require basic structural changes. Those could move in the direction of a new class society, a bureaucratic sort of collectivism, or toward a new communitarianism, a democratic socialism.

This summary analysis points to a key assumption of all that follows and helps to define a central problem for socialists seeking to transcend the welfare state. *Socialism will have to define itself in the course of a contradictory transitional period in which elements of both traditional capitalism and corporate collectivism will coexist with, and threaten, socialist innovations.*

It is foolish to imagine a day, a month, or a year when society suddenly "leaps" from capitalism to socialism; the very complexity of modern society precludes that. Where, in some brief period of time, will one suddenly find a socialist cadre capable of taking over from the capitalist managers? How can new psychologies, and new ethics, be created quickly? Moreover, one must have a due respect for socialist ignorance. We know the evils of the old order in great detail, but we do not have all the plans for the new order in our hip pocket. Even if we did, that would be of small help since a socialist society must be built democratically and cannot be proclaimed from on high.

After all, socialists do not simply propose a new economy. We realize that there must be a transformation of culture, of individual and collective values, if the new structures are to

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matter. As Antonio Gramsci rightly insisted, socialism is the work of an epoch and it has to do with an entire society, not just with property forms or tax laws.

But that fact creates enormous problems. How, for instance, does one avoid the co-optation of partial measures of socialization in an economy in which corporate collectivism retains considerable power? In a recent book, Serge Christophe Kolm analyzed what this meant in the Chile of *Unidad Popular*. One of the first measures of the Allende government was to increase enormously the wages of the poor while holding down prices. This meant, however, a reduction in the profits of the private sector—profits that had been the traditional source of new investment funds. At first, the problem was not too serious since the wage policy set off a consumer boom. But eventually, there occurred a slowdown and the corporations had to borrow, thereby setting into motion the inflationary spiral. The Nixon administration, the CIA, the copper companies, the world financial community (including the World Bank), all did what they could to make matters worse.

Still, the relevant point here is that Chile demonstrates the inherent difficulties in introducing socialist measures in an economy still manifesting strong capitalist tendencies. So, alas, does the Tennessee Valley Authority. From its inception under the New Deal until the early '50s, the TVA managed to control floods and generate power in a way that enormously stimulated the region's economy. But from the early '50s on, this public property behaved more and more in a classic private way. It moved from hydropower to coal and in the process was a major initiator of the destructive strip-mining of Appalachia. Indeed, it is possible to make a sad generalization: *most existing nationalized enterprises in the world behave about as badly as private enterprises.* When one adds that those nationalized companies constitute, more often than not, the collectivization of private losses and inefficiencies one gets a sense of the enormous difficulties of a transition toward socialism within the contradictory world of late capitalism. In that setting, the danger of co-optation does not arise, primarily because of the personal corruption of leaders or bureaucrats; it is a structural tendency of the society.

So in imagining socialism as it would emerge just the other side of the welfare state, the imagination must be realistic. How does one begin to create a new society in a world in which there will be capitalist striving for gain, socialist egalitarianism, and "communist" free goods in the libertarian sense of the word as used by Marx in his *Critique of the Gotha Program.* Under such difficult conditions, how is it possible to transfer the control of basic investment decisions from private boardrooms to the democratic process?

In facing up to these issues within the framework of a brief essay, much that is enormously important will be placed in parentheses. I will deal with a single developed society and ignore the international implications of socialism that are, in other contexts, decisive. I will posit the existence of a political movement capable of taking the lead in implementing the proposals I make, and I will focus on economic and social structures and present my illustrations as evocative symbols of a possible future, and not at all as a fully worked-out program.

II: Speculations and Possibilities

First, socialism proposes a national planning process in which all the people would have an *effective* right to participate.

Through a political process, the society would consider its basic options. Put in American terms, the Administration would outline the needs of the next period and the resources available to meet them. Since the latter would not be infinite, there would have to be proposed "trade-offs." A crash program for the improvement of health might limit the growth of education; the decision to take the benefits of increased productivity in the form of more leisure time would mean that the same productivity could not be spent on more

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consumer goods. This last point is particularly important because one would hope that, as socialist consciousness would rise, so would the tendency toward the decommercialization of life—toward communal, noncommodity forms of consumption, like neighborhood centers or public theaters.

Under such conditions there obviously would be debates over priorities. These would be resolved by a democratic process in which parties would compete with one another over conflicting programs. That, however, would not mean a mere extension of present-day "pluralist" theory, which ignores the way formal democratic rights, precious as they are, can be subverted by economic and social inequalities. In the period of transition, there would not simply be a corporate sector striving to impose its values upon the polity; the government itself would obviously be (and already is) a center of power. For democracy to work in such a context, it would have to be much more profound and real than it is today. Let us imagine two quite unutopian aspects of such a deepening of democracy.

First, if the Administration or even the Administration and the major opposition have an effective monopoly on the machinery and personnel of the planning process, then the formal right to challenge the plan becomes almost empty of content. In French "indicative planning," for instance, the workers are legally guaranteed representation at every level of the system. But they, unlike business and government, do not have the expert staff, the computers, the "knowledge technology" so important in a modern society. Therefore, they normally don't bother to participate in the exercise.

If, then, planning is to be a critical instrument of the assertion of popular control over the investment process, there must be effective provision for democratic participation. Any significant group of people—much larger than a coffee klatsch, much smaller than a majority—should be given the means to challenge the official plan(s). This could be done in at least two ways. Such a group could be given the funds to hire its own experts and computers; or it could be given the right to have the official bureaucracy work out the details of its counterplan(s). Within such a framework, when the Administration and the Congress would go to the various regions and ask for popular inputs, there would not be the *pro forma* hearings that so often prevail today. The critics would be technically as well prepared as the establishment.

Second, the political process itself should be democratized. Here, some of the West European countries now are far ahead of the United States. All television time available to candidates for federal office should be allocated according to a democratic formula. And each significant group should either get subsidies for its own press, or else—as is sometimes the case in this country with intraunion oppositions in campaign periods—have legally guaranteed access to the print media.

Let us assume, then, that truly democratic procedures could be established within the planning process, given a little imagination and a mass socialist political movement. What of the content of the plan(s)? How would it (or they) be rationally debated and worked out? How would it (or they) be implemented democratically without an enormous proliferation of bureaucracy?

It would be of utmost importance that everyone in the planning debates know the real costs of all the proposals. It was thus not an accident that, on the few occasions when he explicitly referred to the socialist future, Marx spoke of the need for careful bookkeeping. Like Max Weber, he regarded bookkeeping as one of the great accomplishments of the capitalist era, and then added that it would be even more necessary under socialism precisely because production would be planned. And it is, of course, one of the central themes in a contemporary indictment of late capitalism that this system falsifies prices by imposing its social costs on helpless people and/or the government.

This point raises a technical question that should at least be noted before moving on to a basic issue. In the absence of capitalist-factor

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markets, can society rationally compute efficient prices? In a famous attack on socialism Ludwig von Mises argued that it would not be possible to do so. He was effectively answered by Oskar Lange, A. P. Lerner, and Joseph Schumpeter (the latter summarizes the debate in *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*). To be sure, I do not accept many of the overly centralist assumptions of their imagined solutions, yet their central point about rational prices under socialism is persuasive. Schumpeter, brilliant Austrian conservative, held that socialist prices would be set by marginal costs; the late Anthony Crosland, a British Fabian, noted that *only* under socialism would such capitalist theories work; and some of the economists grouped around François Mitterand, like Philipe Brachet, have gone into detail as to how this might be done in present-day France. So I will assume that serious debate can take place on the basis of accurate information about "trade-offs."

But does this mean, then, that socialism will operate according to the criterion of profit? And if so, what of the claim that it entails production for use *instead of* profit?

Profit, I would argue on the basis of historical evidence, is the specific form that the surplus from production takes in, and only in, capitalism. Such a surplus exists in all but the most primitive of subsistence societies; it will certainly have to exist under socialism. Under capitalism, the surplus is appropriated by the owners and managers of the means of production, and it is both a title to wealth and to the right to make basic investment decisions about the future of the economy. In pre-capitalist systems, the surplus was appropriated by political and ideological, not economic, means, i.e., on the basis of "God's will" as backed by the human sword.

Under socialism, there will be a social dividend to provide for those who do not (usually because they cannot) work for depreciation and for expansion (on the last count, it should be remembered that I am speaking of the socialist transition when there will be many urgent needs for new investment, both at home and abroad). But that social dividend will not be a "profit." It will be appropriated by the society and allocated after democratic decision-making; it will not go to individuals in the form of wealth or elite power, as is now the case. Second, although a socialist society will have to create a surplus and will want to measure the return on investments as precisely as possible, the resulting "interest rate" will be an accounting device and not a flow of income to private owners. Third, socialist accounting will compute social cost and social benefit in a way that capitalism, for systemic reasons, does not and cannot do. For instance, mainstream economists today defend the ruin of the Northeastern and Middle Western cities as an inevitable—tolerable if unfortunate—consequence of making a more "efficient" use of resources. But efficiency, it must be understood, is not a mathematical absolute obeyed by technocrats; it is always defined in relation to the interests of different groups and individuals. Under capitalism this is done behind a veil of mystifying rationalization and in the interests of a minority. Under socialism, the term will be democratically defined in public debate in relation to the needs of the majority.

Let us assume, then, that the democratic planning process has determined the basic priorities of the society. How will they be implemented?

There are two existing models, neither of them applicable to democratic socialism. In the Soviet Union and other Communist countries, there is centralized command planning with the bureaucracy setting thousands of prices and production targets. The system is politically totalitarian and economically inefficient—two facts that are closely related to one another. I therefore reject this model because it does not satisfy basic socialist goals. The other model, that of indicative planning, is also not the way to democratic socialism, but it is worth examining more closely for a moment since it highlights one of the critical differences

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between liberalism (in the American sense of that term) and socialism.

Here is how Stephen S. Cohen described French indicative planning in a 1977 paper for the Joint Economic Committee. There is, he says, an economic "concert" achieved without the participation of the unions, consumers, or small businessmen.

> The economic concert is based on a simple political ideology and defines a simple political role for planning. The state needs a high performance economy. This has come to mean a fundamental commitment by the state to the expansion and modernization of the big business sector. Big business needs the active cooperation of the state. It needs the state to maintain a high level of effective demand and to socialize many of its costs. It also needs the aid of the state in managing its own affairs. The overarching organization provided by the state helps industry to regulate competitive forces. In brief, big business finds that it needs a cooperative economy and it needs the state to organize that cooperation. Most modern capitalist nations are doing some variant of the state-big business partnership model, but nowhere with such clarity and enthusiasm as in France.

The French planners assume that private corporate priorities are the pivot upon which all decisions turn and that it is, therefore, the role of the plan to facilitate, and sometimes humanize, the work of big business in the name of the common good. This, it will be noted, is the tacit assumption of much of American liberalism. However, it should be emphasized that in technocratic, *dirigiste* France, what is implicit in America has achieved the status of an ideology. I insist upon this point for a political reason: the American liberals (including labor liberals) who unconsciously accept the corporate premise are often also hostile to corporations and in the future could become socialist. This is not true of a principled French technocrat or, rather, the conversion required in the second case is much more profound. One of the hopeful aspects of American liberalism is its contradictory character.

In any case, we have come to a fundamental divide, one that marks off socialism from all variants of capitalist reform. The latter believed that liberal goals can be limited to a late-capitalist economic and social structure, while socialists define that structure as the core of the problem. What, then, is the socialist alternative? How will socialists actually implement the lovely choices made in the democratic planning process?

Not by command of the Soviet, or any other, model. However, in rejecting indicative planning within a late-capitalist society that is economically and politically dominated by corporate power, one is not ruling out indicative planning in an utterly different milieu. For in imagining a socialist transition from capitalism toward the good society, I hypothesize two different motivations for working to fulfill the democratic plan and see them as operating within three different kinds of enterprises.

The first motive is individual gain. The goal of socialism, clearly, is to transcend greed as far as is possible, and to act upon the basis of "to each according to his/her need, from each according to his/her ability." This lies in the distance, although approximations of it should begin on the first day of socialist transition. But as socialism emerges from capitalism, there would be differentials in wages within an enterprise and even differentials between enterprises within the same industry. At the same time, there would be a progressive, egalitarian tax program to reduce radically the outrageous spread between executive and worker pay in capitalism today. Managers receiving hundreds of thousands a year—and setting their compensation for themselves—are not being paid wages, but if I may speak in an old yet useful language, they are appropriating surplus value in the guise of wages.

The wage structure, then, would be infinitely more progressive than it is within capitalism and would follow the Biblical injunction by exalting the lowly and making plain the high ones. Yet, there would be

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differentials related to skill and output and these would be tolerated, precisely as an incentive for individuals and enterprises to produce more efficiently. Moreover, the differentials between enterprises, even though carefully limited, would be the basis of a certain competition between them. It would obviously be preferable if moral incentives alone would guarantee efficient cooperation with the planned priorities. But in this transitional stage, there is simply no realistic reason to suppose that this would be the case.

The second major motivation would be moral. It would not suffice, in and of itself; but it is absolutely essential as the growing edge of socialist possibility. The point, however, is not self-evident. In the United States moral incentives have played a role during wartime, but only then. Moreover, the American labor movement has been particularly hostile to "work enrichment" schemes, regarding them as artfully designed programs to get more work out of fewer people. More often than not, this judgment has been accurate. Why, then, assume that American workers as they are will be moved to change their attitudes in a socialist transition?

Surely, it must be obvious—not simply the fact, but a fact plain for one and all to see—that the savings of productivity will primarily go to the workers who make them or to the society as a whole. If they go to the workers, then old-fashioned capitalist psychology would explain why this incentive would work. But what does it mean to say that the gains would go to the "society"? Why would that motivate the average worker? The answer to this question is best given in the form of a generalization about the socialist wage in a transition period.

Wage, then, will be composed of three different elements (I borrow some insights from Serge Christophe Kolm). It would be capitalist in the sense that there would be differentials based on performance; it would be socialist in that an egalitarian tax policy would severely limit the differentials and work toward a redistribution of income and wealth; it would be "communist" (in the libertarian sense) in that an increasing part of people's incomes would take the form of "free" goods, i.e., collectively paid goods and services, such as health, education, transportation. So a part of the wage would be received collectively, as a social dividend from heightened productivity.

Far-fetched? Not at all. Right now, the socialist parties of Sweden and Holland are moving in the direction of such collective payment, proposing that corporations pay a portion of their tax in stock placed in a worker-controlled mutual fund. And one of the reasons for this development is, precisely, to give workers a communal stake in productivity. This is not, it should be noted, a traditional stock-sharing device where the individual workers get shares in lieu of certain wage increases. In Sweden, this is the conservative alternative. It is a proposal for the *social* sharing of productivity gains.

One last point on wage structure. The capitalist component would be settled by collective bargaining negotiations. That issue, and the more general question of working conditions, would provide one of the bases for the continuing existence of a trade-union movement. The socialist and "communist" components would be determined by a political process in which unions, parties, and other voluntary institutions would be involved. Here again, I am positing the necessity of conflict among organizations that would interpret the common good in terms of the particular good of different strata of the citizenry.

So individuals would be motivated to cooperate in the work of the plan on the basis of capitalist, socialist, and "communist" incentives. What about enterprises? Given the previous analysis, I assume that there will be three main types of economic organization: socially owned; privately owned large enterprises; and cooperatives. There will also be a stratum of privately owned small businesses, but these will function primarily in the area of consumer markets and are not likely to play a decisive role in fulfilling the society's democratic priorities for production.

In all three of the major sectors there will be

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elected worker representation at every level. This is not merely desirable as a way of dealing with alienation. It is a practical necessity if the sense of communal solidarity—the socialist motive—is to grow. And that, in turn, increases productivity. It is also essential to the antibureaucratic aspect of the socialist program, institutionalizing as many local, face-to-face controls on authority as is possible.

So far, this may sound like the socialist version of apple pie. It is much more problematic—and important—than that. Contemporary capitalist technology, Harry Braverman persuasively argues in *Labor and Monopoly Capital,* did not evolve in a value-free, technical way. It had, and has, social and even ideological functions. Specifically, it is not an accident that this technology worked at every point to expropriate the skills of the workers, to dispossess them of all decision-making, and to try to turn out automatons. Therefore, as a technology incarnating capitalist values is extremely difficult to run on a socialist basis, one of the goals of the transition will be to build different kinds of factories—and offices.

I make the last point about offices for an important purpose. Most socialist language and imagining is focused in terms of plants. But what about the "post-industrial society"? Without going into all the complexities of that question, it should be noted that a major part of the "tertiary sector" is made up of service workers in large, anonymous, factorylike settings, e.g., typing pools, supermarkets, the middling and lower levels of the information industry. Moreover, the skilled and educated reaches of this sector—engineering, universities—often in themselves require collegiality. So I am not projecting workers' control as an exclusively blue-collar proposal.

But then neither can workers' control operate as an absolute. In the socialist transition, as many functions as possible will be located on the most immediate level, where the majority of the people work. But individual enterprises or industries cannot be given the right to veto the democratic plans of the entire nation. It is possible, as the Yugoslav experience shows (and the authoritarian character of that country's political structure is not relevant to this point), for worker-controlled enterprises to develop a collective egotism. The Yugoslavs, for instance, have found it difficult to convince the more affluent collectives to invest their surplus in high-risk underdeveloped areas. So workers' control is not a panacea, and it will require democratic political checks on the part of the society as a whole. It even demands the redesign of technology and economic organization, in the postindustrial as well as in the industrial sectors.

Workers' control will function in all the enterprises of the society—but those enterprises will have different structures.

- First, there is the social property sector. I say social, not nationalized, property for a reason. Any fool or charlatan or dictator can nationalize a plant. In and of itself, nationalization is neither good nor bad. Or, rather, to the degree that nationalization suggests centralized state ownership, it is bad. It is not necessary to argue the almost self-evident point that such ownership is politically hostile to democracy and economically inefficient. "Social property" stresses both the direct participation of the actual producers *and* democratic control by society rather than administrative control by bureaucrats.

It is painfully obvious that it is simpler to stitch together such harmonious formulas than to realize them in practice. As John Kenneth Galbraith emphasized in *The New Industrial State,* elected bodies either lack the competence to oversee the managers of public property or, if they acquire that competence, they create a second bureaucracy to regulate the first. Galbraith was thinking of existing nationalizations, which do not involve workers' control, but still his point is a substantial one. As I mentioned earlier, in the very first stages of the transition it will be difficult to impose participatory socialist values upon an antiparticipatory capitalist technology. Therefore, I do not see socializa-

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tion as an act, a law, or a charter, but as a *process* in which democratic forces will have to struggle during an entire historic period to give real content to their legal rights.

In this same spirit, social property will obviously not be operated as departments of the state run by civil servants. They should be constituted on the model of the TVA, as authorities with relative independence but ultimate responsibility to the elected representatives of the people. Another check upon their power will be economic. There will be a multiplicity of such authorities within each industry. The size of American enterprises, as Robert Lekachman has pointed out, is not determined by the technical requirements of "economies of scale" but is the result of the drive of major corporations to control markets, politics, and consumer taste. Within a framework of democratic planning there would not be an antitrust utopia of Adam Smithian competition among tiny economic units in a perfect market, but there could be a rational policy on corporate size and a consequent decentralization of economic power.

With certain carefully defined exceptions, social enterprises would be required to pay their own way and return a surplus for depreciation, new investment, and the social dividend. Obviously, there would be cases when, in full consciousness of the cost, society would want to continue subsidizing production for "noneconomic" reasons (in the callous, capitalist sense). That, it should be noted, is the case in most nationalized industries today, and although it might also be true under socialism, it would hardly be the dominant model. The point would be to locate social property in surplus-yielding activities. For example, the present private energy industry is completely unwilling to develop alternative sources of energy without huge government subsidies. If it gets that money from Washington it will surely develop a socially inappropriate technology. This, therefore, would be a prime area for society to invest in socially oriented research and development, which it would implement through socially owned enterprises.

Social property would also be a key element in a full-employment policy that would emphasize the growth of all regions rather than a competitive struggle between regions as in the current "beggar thy neighbor" situation in the United States. Instead of providing private corporations with multimillion- (and billion-) dollar bribes to go into the South Bronx or Appalachia—which are always collected and often dishonored—locating new and vital social industries in such areas would do that job much more directly and efficiently.

- The second tier of economic activity would be a profoundly modified private sector.

You cannot, I have stressed, *socialize* an economy overnight. It is possible to nationalize the "commanding heights" at a stroke, but that would have the negative consequences I have already described. So we must anticipate a corporate sector in the socialist transition. But if that is a necessary fact of life it is also a problematic one. A major private company, Oskar Lange argued in one of his classic discussions, is not likely to behave responsibly if it operates within a socialist political environment and feels that it is working, so to speak, on death row. Part of that problem might be met because of developments that postdate Lange's fears: the emergence of a Galbraithian "technostructure" that, except at the very summit, will hire out to anybody as long as the pay is relatively good. But precisely that summit is the controlling factor in today's economic world.

This is why workers' control and public participation in the corporate structure are so important. The private title to corporate wealth and a limited profit have to be recognized; but many of the existing functions of corporate power can be socialized. For example, the worker and public representatives on the board of directors should routinely reveal all company secrets to the public. Secret debate and decision-making with regard to plant location, pricing, new products, hiring and firing policy, etc. are today considered to be "managerial prerogatives." In the private sector during a

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socialist transition such matters would be made as transparent as possible and would be subjected to social controls within the planning process.

Still, a transitional socialism would have to tolerate private profits from this sector. One of the reasons why people would invest in such undertaking would be in order to make money. (I speak here of investment in new physical assets—real investment—not of the shuffling and dealing of stock certificates in the great gambling house on Wall Street, a parasitic, near functionless waste of resources that could simply be abolished.) The deleterious social consequences of the continuing existence of profit would, however, be moderated by a highly progressive tax policy and, above all, an inheritance law that would effectively end the possibility of transferring large concentrations of wealth from generation unto generation. By now, the Ford family has been more than compensated for cantankerous old Henry's genius.

- Finally, there would be a major cooperative sector, an idea much stressed in 19th-century socialism.

In the United States, cooperatives account for less than 1 percent of GNP; in Finland, their share is 10 percent; in Israel, 30 percent. There is, then, enormous room in this country for expansion of the cooperative principle. During the socialist transition we might make great use of one of the Rooseveltian reforms: the Rural Electrification Administration. Under that system, the government has supplied cheap (subsidized) credit to cooperators and thereby accomplished a decentralized, locally controlled electrification of the countryside. (The private sector opposed the program in part on the grounds that farmers did not need electricity!) That strategy could be a major level of socialist policy in the future. It would allow for a proliferation of locally controlled, face-to-face undertakings, including community corporations. In this sector, the capitalist motivation would be most attenuated, the socialist most emphasized as the "associated producers" would actually run most of their own working lives.

The goods and services of these three tiers of production would be distributed in two ways. There would be free goods and services collectively paid for by various levels of government. How would one control waste and overuse in this area? A New York *Daily News* dispatch on the 13th anniversary of National Health in Great Britain suggests that the problem itself might be somewhat exaggerated. Not only is British medicine superior in some important indices to its American counterpart, it is also less costly as a percentage of GNP and has a lower rate of patient utilization. Even so, there obviously should be some checks on the provision of free goods and services. An idea that is already partly at work in the United States might be generalized well beyond its present use. Health maintenance organizations now provide lump-sum payments for the care of an entire group. If the providers can maintain set standards but reduce costs, they are able to get some of the savings from their own productivity. This principle might be tried out in other areas, e.g., in transportation.

Second, a transitional socialist society would make full use of the virtues of the market mechanism in the areas where consumers would choose, and pay for, their goods and services. To be sure, there is no point in investing markets with the mystical powers claimed for them by their capitalist advocates—advocates who love to ignore the essential. Thus, after Charles Schultze devotes a lyrical hymn to the power of the "unanimous consent arrangement" within markets, he adds, "if the income distribution is grossly unfair, the concept of voluntary decision and unanimous consent is a charade. . . ." Since this is the prelude to a book that praises markets in the extreme, Schultze never so much as bothers to ask whether the data show that his argument is a charade.

Socialists, however, can do more than probe the question that Schultze side-steps; they can create a new answer to it. That is, if an egalitarian tax policy has enormously reduced the discrepancies in income *and* if

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public control of the private corporation has severely limited, or even abolished, monopoly pricing—*and* if the engineering of consumer taste is replaced by straightforward information—*then* markets could really function as they are supposed to. They would operate within the broad limit of the democratic plan, and alongside the free sector, in order to communicate the desires of the people and to maximize their choice. The existence of such a market would not determine the basic priorities of the economy—but it would provide more real consumer freedom than capitalist society has ever offered.

Fine, someone might reply. Sitting in a study, socialist writers can conjure up all kinds of glowing dreams. But who will pay for all of these utopian proposals?

The largest single source of corporate investment funds in the United States today is found in retained profits. Within the limits already discussed—relative autonomy of the enterprise, but under the ultimate control of a democratic society—that could well be true under socialism. For, as Marx foresaw before anyone else, capitalism has more and more "socialized" itself within its private framework. Horatio Alger and the individual stockholder long ago ceased to be that important to the investment process. Moreover, as the Meidner Plan of the Swedish trade unionists and similar proposals by the Dutch socialists indicate, a democratic sharing in an essentially social surplus could provide the basis for higher rates of capital formation than are now possible under capitalism.

Second, a useful if somewhat capricious book by a corporate apologist, Peter Drucker's *Unseen Revolution,* helps to focus on a socialist solution to the question of Who Pays? Private-sector pension funds, Drucker said in 1976, own 25 percent of the equity capital today, and the pension funds of the self-employed, public employees, and teachers account for another 10 percent of the total. By 1985, Drucker calculates, the pensioners will "own" between 50 percent and 60 percent of equity capital, and 40 percent of debt capital. I put "own" in quotation marks for a reason. Most of those funds are employer-controlled and are invested, as required by law, in an utterly capitalist fashion. The workers cannot sell their pension interest during their working life, borrow on it, etc. It is only available upon retirement and since some of those claims are not fully funded, there are even questions about payoffs.

However, the point here is not the inadequacies of the existing pension system; it is to take Drucker's rhetorical fantasy—that "pension-fund socialism" now exists in the United States—and try to turn it into fact. Roughly two-thirds of domestic welfare expenditures today are for people over 65, and there are in addition the private pension claims Drucker cites. Socialists, I suspect, would want to create a single and uniform system, since current practices give government support enormous inequities. But the point here is that societies committed to the decent care of the aging—as all the welfare states, to one degree or another, are—will indeed have to set aside or provide for huge sums of money.

In Sweden some of those funds are already used for investment in housing. Here the AFL-CIO has a program to attract union funds, where possible, into similar undertakings. Why not generalize again? An intelligent and socially motivated investment of pension funds would provide an enormous pool of capital for all three sectors of the economy in a socialist transition.

Third, some individuals might want to save more of their income than others. Within the constraints of a socialist commitment to wealth and income redistribution, that could be accomplished by the revival of an old American institution: the Post Office savings system. And there is still another source of savings: the people would pay for the non-free goods in the society and the cost would include, as it now does, funds for depreciation and new investment—but not, as now, under the control and to the benefit of wealthy individuals and their hired managers.

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Finally, there is another important source of savings in the elimination of some of the outrageous waste inherent in American capitalism. Business today spends about $38 billion (in 1977) on advertising. A little of that money provides the public with useful information about products people truly want and need; a major portion of it is employed in a corporate disinformation program to gull the supposedly sovereign consumer. Strict standards for private advertising and public support for a variety of (competing) consumer services could free much of those outlays, and a fully employed economy could find useful work for the people now living off them.

I mentioned earlier the parasitic character of a great deal of the activity on Wall Street and in the financial industry as a whole. A portion of the American legal profession thrives on the pervasive venality of the society. A radically progressive income and inheritance tax law, to take but one example, could free the graduates of many of the elite schools from essentially wasteful and antisocial lives. There are other activities—antiunion consultants, managerial psychologists, etc.—which are a cost of capitalist production but not of production itself. Here again, socialism, even in the confused period of transition, could offer a more efficient system (always on the premise of a social, not a corporate, definition of efficiency).

It would thus be possible in a socialist transition to plan democratically, to effectuate that plan realistically, and to finance the entire process. In making this point, I have not tried to be complete and detailed in my analysis, only to evoke the direction—and the problems—of socialist solutions. Moreover, I have been "economistic" on purpose and not indulged in the poetry of socialism. This is not to suggest that the culture and personal dimensions of socialism are unimportant. On the contrary, the economic programs are only means to the noneconomic end of human liberation. But the cynics impugn those ends by saying that we socialists cannot realistically present a program of means. And that is what I have tried to do here, in briefest outline.

III: A Vision of That Socialist Future

I am writing this essay during the summer of discontent of 1978. Proposition 13 has just passed in California and polls in that state show that the voters want welfare to be cut, first and foremost. There are many other signs of a growing social meanness. The hope and good feelings of the first half of the '60s seem to lie a century or so behind us. Is, then, this description of measures that go far beyond the welfare state a simple exercise in social fantasy? I think not.

First, there is the reason I have already given. The problems of American society today are structural and they require deep-going changes. Those, I noted, could be undertaken by sophisticated and modern reactionaries—or by democratic socialists incorporating the best of liberalism in a movement that goes beyond the welfare state. If it is thus necessary to project the middle-distant future in an open-ended way, with both rightist and leftist possibilities, it is certain that incantation, conservatism-as-usual, or political temper tantrums against our complexities will not work. The ideas I have described here are, I believe, more realistic than most of the popular panaceas of the late '70s.

Second, all utopian anticipations of the future are also descriptions of, and prescriptions for, the present. This effort at imagining socialism is rooted in—and, more important, relevant too—the America of the late '70s. In the briefest and sketchiest fashion, let me simply list some urgent and possible contemporary approximations of the more distant hopes whose realization and beginnings I have just imagined.

HERE AND NOW the democratic left should:

- Challenge corporate control of the investment process by insisting that public policy concern itself with what is produced, and how it is decided, instead of confining itself to

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Keynesian "aggregates" and leaving all the details to the private sector. This would include public controls over private investment decisions, such as specifying the conditions under which corporations can leave a locality or oligopolies can raise prices, as well as such public undertakings as a democratically owned and controlled gas and oil company;

- Demand national economic planning for full employment, with the implementation of the Humphrey-Hawkins bill as a first, but only a first, step;
- Suggest public cost-conscious and accurate definitions of economic alternatives in which corporations are charged for their use and destruction of social resources;
- Propose sweeping tax reform aimed at a redistribution of income and wealth and, in particular, at the unearned income of rentiers and the untaxed wealth of successive generations of the rich;
- Suggest a rethinking of the entire American pension system, public and private, with emphasis on using such funds, theoretically "owned" by the people, for social purposes as determined democratically by the people;
- Urge employee and public representation on the boards of directors of all major corporations and a radical increase in democratic decision-making by primary workers in factories and offices;
- Propose federal support for a vast expansion of producer and consumer cooperatives, including funds for community corporations.

SOME OF THESE PROPOSALS are more difficult to imagine in the near future than others, yet none of them requires a commitment to socialism and most have been approved in principle by major institutions of the mass of the democratic left. But why burden such empirically justifiable ideas by relating them to an ideology called "socialism"? There are two reasons why I do that. First, time is running out on the very American creed of utopian pragmatism, i.e., the religious conviction that all problems can be solved in the middle of the road by a process of bumbling along. The ills that afflict our society—which, to repeat the most obvious and appalling of current examples, are laying waste entire cities as effectively as a rocket attack—are systemic. They are the product of a late capitalism that collectivizes on the basis of antisocial, corporate priorities. Either the democratic left will find a systemic response to that challenge, which is fairly called socialism, or the undemocratic right will.

Second, America—Western capitalism, the world—desperately needs, not simply a legislative shopping list, but a vision. Not a religion, not a secular salvation; but a new sense of purpose. And so, in the details sketched out hopefully here there is not only a rational response to immediate issues but also the intimation of some tentative steps in the direction of a new civilization. □

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Luther Carpenter

Do "Limits of Growth" Cripple the Good Society?

I. Are Limits to Growth Real?

Since 1945, rapid growth of gross national products has been the chief goal of Western governments. It has been the basis of the welfare-state compromise, the answer to class tension and to demands for social justice in the distribution of wealth and power. Rapid growth allowed workers' real incomes to increase and social services to expand, without a head-on challenge to the economic privileges of the corporations. It even permitted the transfer of small amounts of aid to underdeveloped countries. The achievement has been remarkable.

By the end of the 1960s, many observers had become concerned that pure "growthmanship" couldn't go on indefinitely. These anxieties were raised to new intensity by the publication of a thin paperback book in 1972, entitled *The Limits to Growth.* It is often called "the Club of Rome report," because that body of industrialists and professional people commissioned it from an MIT team headed by Dennis and Donella Meadows. *The Limits to Growth* argued that "five major trends of global concern—accelerating industrialization, rapid population growth, widespread malnutrition, depletion of non-renewable resources, and a deteriorating environment . . ."[1] would encounter absolute limits within the foreseeable future. If any of these limits were reached, the world's economy would collapse. There would be a permanent reduction in the world's population and in the wealth available to each person. Furthermore, if one limit were pushed back, another would come into play; the real problem was the interaction between the variables that imposed limits. According to *The Limits to Growth*, the only viable option was a prompt reduction in growth rates. The world would have to curtail industrial growth as well as population increases, reaching a steady-state economy before the year 2000. If the world waited until 2000 to introduce policies leading to a steady-state economy, no equilibrium could ever be established.

These conclusions were too shocking to accept at face value. Since 1972, many writers have sought to challenge them, revise them, or extend the argument. Where does the argument stand now? Have the initial assertions of *The Limits to Growth* been disproved, so that we may continue to base our economic and social policies on rapid economic growth?[2] Or do there appear to be real limits to growth that must be considered in framing economic policies?

As soon as *The Limits to Growth* appeared, critics challenged its "doomsday" conclusions and its methodological bases. The political implications of a no-growth world were very crude: Third-World countries would be left in permanent poverty unless a radical redistribution of wealth took place. Critics asserted that this failure to propose different policies for developed and underdeveloped nations revealed a basic flaw in the computer model used by Jay Forrester and the Meadows' team. It used worldwide aggregates, leaving

For notes to this article, see pp. 478-79.

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out immense regional differences in wealth and in the consumption of energy and resources.

Many critics said that the Meadows' pessimistic conclusions were the mechanical result of unrealistically pessimistic assumptions. These assumptions included the use of proven reserves of basic nonrenewable resources, such as fossil fuels and minerals, without making any allowances for the discovery of new supplies. Such criticisms have had an effect. Most writers on energy, for example, now use M. King Hubbert's estimates of world oil resources, which are nearly three times as large as those that the Meadows used. The Meadows had sought to anticipate the objection that their estimates were too low by saying that their computer runs indicated that doubling estimates of available resources would only buy a few years' time. However, a group at Sussex University in England asserted that the Meadows' model did not yield such categorical results; the results would vary significantly if relatively small rates of technological change and resource discovery were included.[3]

Technological innovation is not a constant; it is an indeterminacy. It can be encouraged or discouraged; research can succeed or fail, and the targets chosen for research are crucial. Thus the Sussex report only restored room for human action. It asserted that there are more adaptive mechanisms in Western economies than the Meadows' team had allowed for, and it reduced sharply the likelihood of a catastrophic collapse of the earth's carrying capacity. But the final verdict was "Not Proven," rather than "Not Guilty." The Sussex report made three crucial concessions to the proponents of limits to growth. Energy, other natural resources, pollution, and food supplies still are problem areas; unrestricted growth is not necessarily the best answer to these problems; and there are social and political limits to growth that may prove more important than purely physical limits.[4]

Can the indeterminacy established by the Sussex group and other critics of the Meadows' report be used to argue that there are no practical limits to growth? Two authors try to make this point: Wilfred Beckerman, in *Two Cheers for the Affluent Society*, and Herman Kahn, in *The Next 200 Years*. *The Next 200 Years* hasn't impressed anyone. *Two Cheers for the Affluent Society* is a much more substantial book than Kahn's, but it also ends up with patently unrealistic arguments. Kahn's "Bicentennial and/or Realistic Perspective on Prospects for Mankind" seems a pure guess: "The earth-centered perspective assumes that the world population flattens out at least for a while at 15 billion people, give or take a factor of two (that is, a range of 7.5 to 30 billion); the per capita product at $20,000, give or take a factor of three; and the GNP at about $300 trillion, give or take a factor of five."[5] This estimate of conditions appears to be based on a single S-curve covering the period from 1776 to 2176; it starts with slow growth, escalates to verticality around 1976, and returns to a virtual plateau in 2176. The rest of Kahn's book gives no support to the curve, but merely pushes back physical limits to resource availability.

Both Kahn and Beckerman exaggerate the extent to which indeterminate estimates of the earth's resources justify making no explicit provisions for the future. Kahn, for example, makes calculations based on the percentage of each mineral in the earth's crust, thus ignoring the other uses of the earth's surface (such as farming and living space). Beckerman ultimately takes refuge in the abstract capacity of a market economy to substitute one material for another. This assumption does not deal with the prospect of all resources being consumed at rates that make substitutions harder to make, and it minimizes the dislocations that make it hard to shift from one material to another. This point applies to energy, where optimistic observers anticipate a short-term policy emphasizing coal and a long-term use of renewable sources such as solar, geothermal, and fusion-reactor installations. This scenario discounts the tremendous waste involved in building up the powerhouses and transmission systems needed for one form of energy, only to discard them within a generation. Kahn himself notes

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"that in fact the shift to coal has been slow, one reason being that it takes about 15-20 years to amortize major new coal investments if they include much infrastructure such as ports and railroads."[6] Thus the most optimistic arguments concerning the availability of physical resources lead to the discussion of political and institutional limits, rather than to no scarcities at all.

Both Kahn and Beckerman fail on another critical account. They leave the reader very unsure of the nature of the opposite of limits to growth. This is not an academic question; on it hangs the question of how societies are to grow—in other words, what we should invest in. Should we leave the investment mechanism unfettered, on the assumption that there are no limits to growth and all growth helps everyone? Should we pump money into the investment mechanism, because any slowing of growth in the affluent countries intensifies social conflict? Or should investment be tightly controlled to achieve "balanced growth" and remove specific short-run shortages of energy and food?

On the surface, Kahn and Beckerman seem to be arguing for a combination of the first and second alternatives—unrestricted, undifferentiated growth stimulated by the state. Neither author advocates investment planning, which makes Beckerman's repeated assertion that the only problem is the allocation of resources and products into a trivial cop-out. Their main argument essentially restates the position of economic growth in present-day Western societies. Continued rapid growth should generate wealth that can be diverted into pollution control and investment aid to the developing nations; it should continue to prevent serious class conflict in the West.

This argument is even weaker and more desperate than it would seem. As we found in the 1960s, unplanned growth doesn't automatically reduce domestic tension, and growing wealth doesn't necessarily get diverted to foreign aid and pollution control. Internationally, Beckerman and Kahn are reapplying the "trickle-down" theory that has so often been a cruel disappointment to the poor. In terms of pollution, Beckerman in particular fails to grasp the problem that the ecologists have pointed to. He equates pollution control with spending money on cleaning up, wheras the biologists emphasize natural habitats and fragile interrelationships among species that are disrupted by dredging, land fill, strip-mining, and other forms of development, as well as by the emission of pollutants.

Surprisingly, Kahn and Beckerman swerve away from a complete defense of unrestricted growth. Kahn says, ". . . we do not expect economic growth to continue indefinitely; instead, its recent exponential growth will probably slow to a low or zero rate."[7] Beckerman knows that extending any rate exponentially into the indefinite future yields ridiculous results; exponential growth must level out. They thus reach the same conclusion as did the Meadows, but for a totally different reason. Kahn postulates that there are economic and psychological limits to human demands. ". . . with the advance into the superindustrial era there is likely to be a diminution in the marginal utility of wealth and production. With insurance, social security and welfare for all, there will be protection against most of the vagaries of life, and this should produce a shift in priorities and values."[8] Kahn, somewhat nervously, thinks we are at the "inflection point" for this shift of values in the U.S., Canada, and Western Europe. This "postindustrialist" speculation is of interest, because some of the believers in balanced growth also share it. What are we to make of it?

It is hard to believe that this postindustrial transformation of values is actually taking place. The behavior of America's rich and the working classes both seem to contradict it. Large sections of the working classes are nowhere near this inflection point, while America's wealthy seem capable of consuming all-but-infinite amounts of goods. The one piece of evidence that suggests we are nearing the "inflection point" is the amount of alienation and frustration that accompanies our consumer society.

Second, if we were to reach this "inflection

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point"—either because of postindustrialism or because of the need to restrict growth—Keynesianism would be outmoded. Keynesianism operates by increasing the money in circulation so that people may buy more goods. If wealthy people were really curtailing their purchases because they had changed their values, Keynesian pump-priming would be ineffective. On the other hand, if it were necessary to restrict consumption, Kenesianism would be inappropriate. Keynesianism is not a useful technique for slowing down an economy, because it only deals with aggregate demand. If total demand drops in a market economy, the result is increased unemployment. This unemployment is unfairly dumped onto workers, so that they pay the whole cost of slowing down, while the overconsumers (especially those protected by corporations) are relatively untouched. It follows that a relative slowdown—even if it is desired by wealthy people—must be carefully planned. Job preservation and the distribution of income would still be contentious political issues. A postindustrialist shift in values cannot change society by itself.

At the same time that these progrowth writers were finding it difficult to imagine the indefinite pursuit of growth, the proponents of the limits to growth were reassessing their predictions, in the wake of criticisms of the Meadows' assumptions and methodology. The Club of Rome commissioned a new study to remedy one of the methodological shortcomings of the Meadows' report, its use of global totals and averages. This second report, *Mankind at the Turning Point*, was published in 1974. Its authors, Mihajlo Mesarovic and Eduard Pestel, are members of the Club of Rome; Mesarovic is a systems analyst and Pestel an engineer. To make their computer runs more sophisticated, Mesarovic and Pestel divided the world into ten regions. Not surprisingly, this led to some modification of the predictions concerning the collapse of the world economy. "Rather than collapse of the world system as such, catastrophes or collapses on a regional level could occur, possibly long before the middle of the next century, although in different regions, for different reasons, and at different times. Since the world is a system, such catastrophes will be felt profoundly throughout the entire world."[9] This conclusion does no damage to *The Limits of Growth*. Mesarovic and Pestel had to agree that the kind of growth described by Meadows' team, "exponential growth," could not continue indefinitely.[10]

However, Mesarovic and Pestel cannot agree that the opposite of exponential growth is a steady-state economy. They propose a new slogan: "balanced, differentiated growth" or "organic growth." "Organic growth" differs most clearly from a steady-state economy by assuming that the Third World must experience growth in both industry and agriculture. This growth is necessary for humanitarian reasons, to allow Third World peoples to develop habits that will lead to slower population growth, and to prevent international turmoil. Western countries must assist the Third World through the transfer of investment funds, the acceptance of higher prices for oil and other raw materials, and global allocation of scarce resources. It is not clear in the book whether "organic growth" is a euphemism for no-growth in industrialized countries. Mesarovic and Pestel make several vague references to the need for changes in Western life-styles if organic growth is to occur. However, one scenario, in which the developed world accepts an "optimal" price for oil (some 50 percent higher than the 1973 price, apparently, although the base price is not explicitly stated), projects a quadrupling of the gross regional product of the developed world between 1975 and 2025 (from $2 trillion to $8 trillion). We will have to turn to other studies to clear up this ambiguity.

When Mesarovic and Pestel study the variables that the Meadows' team studied, they do not reach the conclusion that there are absolute physical limits to growth that will result in a collapse of the world's economy. They develop scenarios for averting crises as a result of world oil shortages and food shortages in South Asia. Their scenario for preventing famine in South Asia, for example, requires massive foreign investment aid to permit South Asia to build up export

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industries and to produce fertilizer, machinery, and other support services for agriculture. Western nations would also have to change their industrial structure to permit these Asian exports to be sold:

> Scenario five—the only way to avert unprecedented disaster in South Asia—requires the emergence of a new global economic order. Industrial diversification will have to be worldwide and carefully planned with special regard for regional specificity. The most effective use of labor and capital, and the availability of resources, will have to be assessed on a global, long-term basis. Such a system cannot be left to the mercy of narrow national interests, but must rely on long-range world economic arrangements.[11]

This scenario is not particularly likely, but the obstacles to its success lie in political rather than absolute physical limits. These are political limits to the same variables that *The Limits to Growth* discussed—food, energy, and resources. Many of these limits are familiar to us from debates over underdevelopment; they include investment, international aid, and terms of trade. Connecting these political limits to the debate over limits to growth is a common trend in recent works. It occurs in the third report to the Club of Rome, *RIO: Reshaping the International Order,* and in *The Future of the World Economy*, Wassily Leontieff's report for the United Nations.

These two reports introduce a new theme, which is also drawn from the current demands of Third World governments—reducing the inequalities between average incomes in the developed countries and the developing nations. Their target is to reduce the ratio between average incomes in the two regions to a maximum of 7:1 (Leontieff) or a minimum of 3:1 (RIO), as compared with the current 13:1. Both say that their targets can be reached. This optimistic conclusion has received more comment than the underlying challenge to growth concealed in the way that the ratios must be reduced.[12] Both reports rely on expanded investment, much higher prices for raw materials, liberalized trade, and the like; but it becomes clear that the Third World cannot catch up at all without an actual slowing-down of the growth of Western incomes. Leontieff makes this slowing down a basic assumption:

> It was assumed that, as individual developed regions achieve higher levels of gross product per head of population, their growth rate of product *per capita* would decline. Thus, the growth rate of 4 per cent *per capita* would apply to regions in the $3-4,000 income *per capita* range (in 1970 constant prices), a 3 per cent growth rate in the $4-5,000 range, 2.5 per cent in the $5-6,000 range, and so forth. This has the effect of bringing down the average growth rate of gross product in the developed countries to 3.6-4 per cent in the final three decades of this century from the long-term trend of 4.5 per cent.[13]

RIO calculated that their target of 3:1 could only be reached if incomes grow less than "1.7 percent a year in the industrialized countries (approximately half the existing growth rate so as to attain zero growth in about 40 years)."[14] To restrain growth in the industrialized countries, they propose a tax on undesirable consumption that could ultimately be determined and collected internationally.

Here we can see that the political limits to which attention has shifted are every bit as harsh as the absolute physical limits that the Meadows dealt with. If RIO, Leontieff, and Mesarovic and Pestel are right, maximum growth can no longer be the Western ideal. Instead, public policy must find ways of living within these limits.

There are two reasons for the shift of emphasis from absolute physical limits to social and political limits to growth. First, RIO, Leontieff, and Mesarovic and Pestel emphasize a shorter time frame in which questions of ultimate limits will not arise. The Leontieff study in particular ends with 2,000, wheras the earliest crisis graphed out in *The Limits to Growth* might occur around 2,025. Second, these new reports use estimates of basic variables that provide more leeway for growth. We have seen that recent studies tend to use more ample estimates of potential supplies of nonrenewable resources and to

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give wider ranges of uncertainty. In addition, both RIO and Leontieff used U.N. estimates of population growth that incorporate a feedback effect leading to lower rates of increase as incomes rise. These estimates seem more in line with the actual growth of world population since 1970.

Calculations like this reduce the likelihood of an absolute shortage of raw materials within the next century. They show that the most desperate policies—triage or international transfers of food—ought not to be necessary. More generally, absolute physical limits in any sector can be widened if enough capital and expertise are combined. But these conclusions, and the substitution of "balanced growth" or "organic growth," for "limits to growth," must not mislead us into believing that there are no real limits to growth. The proponents of "balanced growth" continue to believe that there *are* absolute physical limits. Leontieff refers to "the well-known constraints on growth, such as the availability of mineral reserves, the potential for food production, and the levels of industrial and commercial pollution of the natural environment."[15] RIO conveniently summarizes these constraints under the heading of "outer limits," as contrasted with the "inner limits" of political and international organization. These social and political limits now take precedence because they appear to be harsher than the revised estimates of outer limits. For example, Roger Revelle guesses that 40 billion people could be accommodated on earth. But to push the outer limit on population back to that figure, $700 billion must be invested in agricultural modernization in Latin America, Africa, and Asia between now and the year 2000. On a yearly basis, Revelle's calculation requires $30 billion—equivalent to 1 percent of the current gross world product, or to 25 percent of yearly physical investment in the U.S.[16] Since it isn't likely that such investments will be made, the effective social and political limit to the world's population is significantly smaller than the outer limit of 40 billion people.

Because the outer limits affect the same variables as the social and political limits, we cannot devote all our attention to removing or pushing back social and political limits to growth. "Balanced growth" and "social and political limits" are less ambiguous than they first appeared. They are more flexible and moderate, but nonetheless a version of "limits to growth."

II: Taking Limits Seriously: Values

IT IS relatively easy to conclude that limits to growth must be taken seriously. The difficult task is to work out what that means. There are two broad possibilities: one is to base our whole democratic politics on them; the other, to factor them into the choice of and discussion of political and economic issues on which we take strong positions. I cannot conclude that limits to growth ought to be the sole determinant for democratic politics. The recent works discussed above indicate that there is enough time to revamp our economy in less drastic, more complex and pluralistic ways than to simply putting a clamp on all growth; and I don't believe that any one of the limits discussed above is an adequate guide by itself to acting on our problems. Limits of growth perspectives must enter the discussion of such basic problems as how we get full employment, what we invest in, and what our urban policy looks like. Consequently, I will search through the various descriptions of limits to growth, first for values and then for economic and political mechanisms that should be factored into our short-term politics. In the course of this search, I will tangentially indicate some of my reasons for concluding that limits to growth cannot become the sole basis of political action.

Descriptions of limits to growth divide into two rough groups. These groups are not at all homogeneous in their recommendations, but at least their disagreements revolve around basic points. One group would drastically revamp Western society to comply with physical limits to growth. These writers—the Meadows, Anne and Paul Ehrlich, Herman Daly, and others—see limits to growth as the main determinant of a new life style. This life style would emphasize a new low-energy

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technology and a value structure based on restraint and ecological balance. The second group—including Leontieff, RIO, and Robert Heilbroner—takes its cues from various social and political limits to growth. Among their answers are a new kind of internationalism—world control of investment and resources that will permit growth in the least developed nations and restrict it in the industrialized world.

The first thing that a reader notices about the "true believers" in absolute physical limits to growth is their moralistic tone. They are often puritanical, with an undertone of glee at the difficulties that "spoiled," "overdeveloped" Americans and Europeans have gotten into. To avert the catastrophic collapse of the world's carrying capacity described by the Meadows, these "true believers" argue that Western life styles must change drastically. This widely repeated exhortation contains—and often conceals—two difficult sets of issues: what changes are necessary, and who should change. The Ehrlichs desire behavioral and technical changes while leaving the power structure and value system largely intact; others demand a change of heart. Both approaches are individualistic and largely apolitical.

In *The End of Affluence,* the Ehrlichs don't ignore social change completely. They recommend that individuals should work within corporations and government for energy savings, better public transportation, changes in products, etc. But their central assumption is that it's already too late for effective public action. "The magic formula to avoid being drowned by the coming social tidal wave is: *get involved in your own future and maximize your independence."*[17] Independence, to the Ehrlichs, starts with reducing commuting and use of energy and culminates in preparing a refuge for disaster. They counsel people to store up stocks of food and clothing and to learn survival skills. One should learn a trade that others will have to purchase to survive, and one should get as far away from the cities as possible.

This individualism looks like pure common sense. It tries to change people's behavior without changing their morals. It takes people as they appear to be and doesn't ask them to become more public spirited. But it is really a fantasy. The disaster that the Ehrlichs expect would create a situation in which the optimal population of the U.S. would be 100 million.[18] Individuals would have to acquire enough resources to hold out while some 125 million people died! This projection implicitly limits survival to those middle-class people who could afford to obtain land and materials. But these middle-class survivors would need more than land, canned goods in the basement, and survival skills. They would need force, to protect their possessions against the hungry urban masses. The polite segregation established by the distance from the cities wouldn't prevent starving people from invading countryside and suburbs. The real defense of the affluent will be their corporations and their political institutions. The Ehrlichs' rugged individualism is a misleading fantasy, because what they are really predicting is social welfare along class lines.

We have seen that most current analysts don't share the Ehrlichs' prediction of a disastrous collapse that would entail class warfare. If we remove that prediction, can individualism be vindicated as an adequate guide for controlling growth? The Ehrlichs believe that self-interest will lead people to reduce their use of energy and resources. The unstated premise for this belief is probably a faith that people act rationally in market situations; there are many flaws in that assumption, including the fact that markets tend to discount the future. *"Après moi le deluge"* is a kind of economic rationality. But even if we accept the premise of economic rationality there is a crucial weakness to individualism. As Hugh Stretton points out, I don't have control over the energy I "save" or the meat I don't eat. This means that individual savings aren't necessarily real reductions in energy use or resource consumption. My "savings" may simply allow someone else—someone greedier, nastier, or richer—to consume more at a lower price. Consequently, I will have very little economic incentive to reduce my consumption. I will

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have much more of an incentive to try to raise my income—using economic and political power—as scarcity reduces my purchasing power, so that I can hold on to what I have.[19]

The facts presented by the Meadows and the Ehrlichs alone do not force individuals to reduce their consumption. To make the argument for restraint compelling, these facts must interlock with moral values that can guide people's choices. The assumptions made by most ecologists, concerning the value of human life and the need for individuals to sacrifice for the survival of the species, don't help much. They lead to exhortations to "sacrifice" more than to discussions of who should sacrifice what.

The moral values found most frequently in the writings of the "doomsayers" are a plea for a new ethics of restraint (such as E. F. Schumacher's Buddhist Economics) and the invocation of an ecological ethic. Both the ecological ethic and the plea for a new ethics of restraint are essentially negative—a guide to what not to do, rather than what to do. Neither provides a convincing answer to the question of who is to act, and with what powers. A new priesthood changing the world through exhortation? But these doomsayers beg for a new ethic that would be pragmatically better suited to the world's situation; they don't have a new ethic to present. An ecological elite? The ecologists in particular are in a radically negative frame of mind, ready to stop new nuclear plants and drilling for offshore oil, but not ready to undertake "ecological engineering."[20] Both of these positions shrink from invoking power to plan a transition. For Daly and the Ehrlichs, all governments are equally suspect; all, socialist as well as capitalist, are committed to growth, and therefore make the situation more desperate. The consequences of accepting this negativism are catastrophic. If one simply prevented further utilization of resources, the resources that are in use will gradually be exhausted. Prices will rise as supplies dwindle. This price rise will encourage some people to turn to resources whose use isn't banned—for example, solar power. But large numbers of people will simply be eliminated as they lose their jobs. This process would reduce the population of the U.S. to the Ehrlichs' optimum of 100 million, but it must be unacceptable to anybody who cares about human suffering. Thus negative, apolitical values lead to disaster; we need positive values that can help plan a transition to slower growth.

To study other moral values that might be used to direct a slowing down of economic growth, we need to turn away from the believers in absolute physical limits. The writers who foresee social and political limits have been more aware of the role of values. Since their arguments suggest that growth must be controlled rather than eliminated, they had to develop ways of determining which forms of growth should be permitted and which ought to be discouraged or even prohibited. In the process, they had to consider questions of equity and the distribution of benefits and sacrifices.

The fourth report commissioned by the Club of Rome, *Goals for Mankind,* summarizes the moral values used by most believers in social and political limits: ". . . growth can occur in many areas where human needs are truly served—where the quality of life within developed countries is enhanced, and where world development and justice are promoted."[21] *Goals for Mankind* does not attempt to make "human need" the cornerstone of a comprehensive structure of goals. The idea of giving highest priority to satisfying human needs is attractive, and at times useful in planning investment. But there are too many problems inherent in defining human needs for it to become a widely used standard at this time. Instead, the quality of life and balanced world development are the values that believers in social and political limits hope to make into effective guides.

International Equity

IT ISN'T EASY to pin down the moral dimension of the argument that balanced world development requires major restraints on growth in the West. The critics of this position are often more explicit, although their precision leads

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to caricatures of the argument for limits. The opponents of limits—Robert W. Tucker (in *Commentary*) and Robert Moss (in the *Economist*), for example—assert that the key issues are the success and moral responsibility of world capitalism. For Moss, people who accept the idea of limits are suckers for international bureaucrats and third-world dictators . . .

> They appeal to the guilty conscience of the well-fed with images of starving millions; they lecture us on our moral obligation to atone for the supposed crimes of colonialism and capitalist exploitation; and they warn that, if we fail to respond, the third world will take revenge by forming new cartels, raising the prices of raw materials, reneging on debts and expropriating Western companies.[22]

Moss's hostile tone is revealing. A nerve has been touched; perhaps Moss is fighting against a sense of guilt that he knows is justified. Yes, guilt is not a good guide to action. It usually works *after* we have done something offensive and often leads to useless symbolic gestures. Any argument based on international guilt won't get Westerners to change their behavior. Yet, Moss and Tucker are focusing on guilt to avoid facing what is making them guilty—the real moral issues of equity and equality. Starving millions are obscene.

It is important to note that neither the RIO report nor *Goals for Mankind* use the arguments of guilt and exploitation that Moss and Taylor find so offensive. "It must be made clear that the Third World is not demanding massive redistribution of the past income and wealth of the rich nations. It is not seeking charity from the prosperous nor equality of income. It is asking for equality of opportunity and insisting on the right to share in future growth."[23] Nor do they explicitly use the conservationists' argument that the West is bloated or overdeveloped. RIO does attack the levels of automobile use, grain consumption, and waste of resources found in the industrialized world, but not in the puritanical manner of the Ehrlichs.

Instead of appealing to guilt, Jan Tinbergen and other authors of RIO draw heavily on the democratic values of such Western social democracies as Sweden and the Netherlands. They rely on principles of equity. The industrialized countries overconsume in relation to the Third World. The variables that define this overconsumption are basic human needs and the outer limits of the planet's carrying capacity. Priority should be given to fulfilling needs as against satisfying demands for nonessential goods. In equity, one cannot oppose this, as long as the sacrifices of nonessential goods don't disrupt Western economies so that people cannot depend on them for their livelihood. Even Moss doesn't argue for complete selfishness. Instead, he denies that there is a conflict between Western and Third World growth: free-market orthodoxy will benefit both. The weaknesses of that argument are obvious. "Free" markets rig the terms of trade in favor of the rich nations; what growth is generated in poor countries doesn't trickle down to the real victims of poverty. Ironically, there might be less direct conflict between the needs of Third World citizens and the consumption patterns on which Western economies are based if Third World countries follow Chinese and Tanzanian models of autarchic village development instead of Moss's free-market ideology. Self-sufficient villages would require less imported technology and materials, such as artificial fertilizers made from petroleum, than villages transformed by the market and the high-technology green revolution.[24] Nonetheless, there would be a conflict over Western desires for raw materials produced in the Third World. As long as there are outer limits to the availability of resources and energy, and as long as there are real limits to the speed with which Third World citizens can reach middle-income levels of consumption,[25] there is an unavoidable issue of equity.

Equity requires a sacrifice only where it confers a meaningful benefit on the less fortunate party. Clearly, there is no point in making sacrifices that only benefit a corrupt ruling elite or are frittered away by an incompetent regime—either in the West or the

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Third World. Moss and Kahn argue that the only conceivable, meaningful benefit is the increase of the per capita output of the Third World countries; changing the ratio between per capita income in Third World countries and in the developed world isn't meaningful. Kahn asserts that ". . . there are very few peasants, workers or even businessmen in developing nations who care much about gaps (whether arithmetic or geometric), no matter how much intellectuals, academics and some businessmen may profess to."[26] Despite his crude closing sneer, Kahn has a point. These ratios are a pretty abstract basis for policies of limited growth, even though the ratios do suggest relationships to the economic satisfactions available in different societies. The equity issue must be balanced against the magnitude of the sacrifice that would be required to reduce the ratios. As we saw above, the Leontieff-U.N. report aimed at reducing the ratios by a factor of two (from 13:1 to 7:1) and RIO envisaged a fourfold reduction (to 3:1). Leontieff hoped that this leveling out would occur naturally, as Westerners became satiated and capital was transferred to less developed countries. If Western growth would slow down naturally, there would be little sacrifice (as long as democratic planning prevented the sacrifice from falling exclusively on the unemployed and poor). Western governments would "only" have to refrain from inflating their economies artificially to keep up full employment; instead, they would have to obtain full employment by non-Keynesian methods. RIO's target, on the other hand, would require a more conscious holding-down of Western growth.

It is hard to believe that Western countries would slow their growth merely because of abstract principles of international equity. The authors of RIO and the Leontieff-U.N. report believe that ideas of equity are not only important in themselves, but that they have consequences. These observers feel that Third World governments (not just intellectuals) will back up their demand for equity with actions. Western nations are vulnerable to pressure on their sources of raw materials, especially if they were to continue to make growth their primary goal. Robert Heilbroner raises another chilling possibility: nuclear blackmail.[27] But Moss and Tucker try to minimize Western vulnerability by pointing out that the U.S. is a major producer of several raw materials and can use its output to resist the formation of cartels. There is an immense risk to this policy. It would lead the U.S. to deplete its resources more rapidly. To get higher domestic output of oil and copper, Americans would end up paying to American corporations the same high prices that they were unwilling to pay to foreigners. Either way, the American economy will face a major adjustment that is likely to limit real growth.

Here we reach the heart of the argument that there are international limits to Western growth. The authors of RIO, in particular, believe that the West's spectacular growth has depended on unstable international mechanisms:

> To many it became increasingly apparent that the economic crisis which plagued the Western world was more than a temporary phenomenon, a pocket of economic turbulence along the route towards even greater riches. They view it as a crisis in the very international structures and mechanisms which the Western world iself has largely created. If the inexorable workings of market forces have helped create the problems, it is clear that they, if left to their own devices, will not be able to solve them.[28]

This argument is vague. It is more a feeling of fragility—a projection of recent monetary and energy shocks—than a fully reasoned list of international obstacles. But the point is valid, nonetheless. The world's economy is delicately poised, and shocks travel quickly—as was demonstrated by the Russian grain purchases of 1973—and we have already seen Mesarovic and Pestel's prediction that famine could spiral into a regional collapse.

In this context, RIO believes that the West has more to gain from accepting the demands of Third World countries than from pursuing unlimited growth. The West would gain stability. A hard-liner would argue that there's no evidence that conciliatory acts

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would moderate Third World jealousy; but this "international macho" looks a little silly when it is applied to such issues as the formation of international buffer stocks of food-stuffs, in order to dampen price swings and guard against famine. Western countries would also benefit from the proposal suggesting they should guide their research efforts into low-energy, low-capital technologies. Not only would these technologies be easier to apply in poor countries; they would also help the wealthy countries adapt to high energy prices and slower growth. These measures aren't even sacrifices.

Other Third World demands that RIO includes in its program of balanced growth demand a real sacrifice that may be unacceptable. At the U.N. Industrial Development Organization Conference in 1975, Third World countries announced the goal of producing 25 percent of world industrial output by the year 2000. To come anywhere near this goal, developed countries would have to permit the transfer of industrial jobs. Western corporations have already begun to transfer jobs in industries such as textiles and shoes—and, naturally, trade unionists and socialists have objected. Allowing these industries to move has led to imbalances in the West. Old manufacturing areas decline; unemployment rises for unskilled workers and new entrants into the labor market.

We should cure these side effects but not oppose the cause, the authors of RIO say: "This spectre can be exorcised by manpower training and retraining programmes combined with industrial development and financial incentive policies." To locate the industries in which new jobs could be created for displaced workers, they follow the theory of comparative advantage: "The industrialized countries, for example, have a comparative advantage in the manufacture of textile machinery but not necessarily in the manufacture of all textile goods. . . ." Other examples in which the industrialized countries have a comparative advantage include most metal-working industries, the electronics industry, and research-intensive industries.[29] There are two problems with this analysis. As it stands, these industries are not producing enough jobs to give everyone the opportunities they need. Second, if Western countries invest heavily in these areas, they will evolve deeper into the high-capital, high-energy economy that the "limits to growth" writers have been criticizing.

Thus there is a real conflict between our need to create full employment in the industrialized world and the policies RIO proposes for balanced international growth. In pursuing international balance, RIO's policies may create unacceptable imbalances in the West. These imbalances might be cured by more radical changes, such as work sharing, but it is unlikely that we could mobilize enough support to obtain such adjustments in the short run. Without safeguards for workers' opportunities, we can't afford to encourage the transfer of jobs. The alternative might be to abandon the theory of comparative advantage, and the large expenditure of resources on international trade that it implies, and to use the planning techniques RIO mentions in order to achieve internal balanced growth. International free trade need not be an article of faith for democrats and social democrats. Bilateral swaps of goods are more compatible with some concepts of national planning, and these might be more stable in a world of limited growth.[30]

Despite these misgivings, I feel that the argument of international equity provides a strong moral basis for controlling growth that interlocks with the projection of limits. It does oblige the industrialized world to refrain from straining the outer limits of the earth's carrying capacity, and from monopolizing scarce resources where there is a direct conflict with Third World development.

Quality of Life

INCREASED INTERNATIONAL TRANSFERS, changes in international trade, and other restraints imposed by international equity can only determine a small portion of an industrialized nation's production. There are

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real limits to the amounts of aid and trade that Third World countries can absorb without displacing native producers. The U.N. has never recommended devoting more than 1 percent of an industrialized nation's GNP to international aid. Consequently, Western countries have to turn homeward to find additional values for controlling growth. Many believers in balanced growth say that the West should make an improved quality of life their basic goal. This slogan has a certain plausibility. It rests on a voluminous critical literature establishing that growth doesn't automatically create happiness and that there are social costs that "growthmania" hasn't taken into account.

But, as we have seen, there is little reason to believe that a perception of these side effects of growth will generate a spontaneous transition to a postindustrial value structure. In contrast to pleas for a new ethic, the "quality of life" argument is not purely a negative plea to stop doing things. It attempts to offer some positive directions for human activity that might yield more satisfaction, at a lower cost in energy and resources.

Much of the improvement in the quality of people's lives over the last half-century has come from the expansion of social services. Robert Heilbroner succinctly states the argument for continuing to expand the welfare state:

> It is possible that growth could be permitted to continue for an indefinite period, provided that it were confined to outputs that consumed few resources and generated little heat. An expansion in the services of government, in the administration of justice, in the provision of better health and education, arts and entertainment, would not only rescue the system from a fatal encounter with the environment but might produce enough "growth" to ease the income distribution problem.[31]

I agree with a large part of this argument, yet there are two major limits to our ability to make social services the answer to limits to growth. First, it isn't clear that all social services consume fewer resources than industrial production. Even in a labor-intensive field such as medicine, the tendency in America is to emphasize capital-intensive procedures (open-heart surgery, kidney machines), new hospitals, and the pharmaceutical industry (which consumes petroleum both as a fuel and a raw material). Heilbroner's argument applies best to those social services that use large amounts of labor and few resources; home service for sick people is a good example. Second, the popular acceptance of attacks on social services suggests that there are real limits to most people's desire for them. In *Social Limits to Growth*, Fred Hirsch points out that the spread of higher education, for example, has created frustration as well as satisfaction. Increasing the availability of higher education has increased the credentials needed to get a good job and lengthens the queue of people waiting for jobs. People expect a reward for their investment in education and are frustrated when it doesn't arrive. Education cannot be separated from the economic expectations people bring to it and turned into a form of mass entertainment to take people's minds off material goods. For these reasons, I feel that the role of social services in postindustrial speculations may be exaggerated. It smacks a little of a desperate search to fill a vacuum, and a little of the self-interest of social-service professionals.

Criticisms of alienation logically lead to the belief that increased democracy, especially industrial democracy, would improve the quality of life. Many observers, such as L. S. Stavrianos in *The Promise of the Coming Dark Age*, feel that a less growth-ridden society would offer more room for industrial democracy. However, industrial democracy cannot be offered as an alternative to growth or a motive for reducing growth. The examples assembled by David Jenkins in *Job Power* show that wages are almost always increased when work is redesigned, both to obtain workers' confidence and to distribute the increased productivity. This doesn't mean that industrial democracy should be abandoned as a goal. Increased productivity can be taken as extra leisure time, at least in part. And industrial democracy itself is worth demanding. That is true of other major social

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democratic values—most notably equality. Hugh Stretton demonstrates that virtually all environmental issues can be faced either in a manner that furthers equality or one that furthers inequality.[32] Clearly, it is important for democratically minded people to insist on the egalitarian solution to environmental issues—for example, to demand gas rationing rather than let higher prices choke off consumption by the poorest motorists. Traditional democratic socialist values, such as equality, are nowhere near as vague as "the quality of life" or "a new ethic." Despite the problems that philosophers can find with them, they provide operational answers to "who should sacrifice" and "who should decide." Equality and democracy will not solve the problems of limited growth by themselves; but they can interlock with the facts that scientists and economists provide.

Many people will disagree with this conclusion. It doesn't provide the bold new motive they are looking for; it appeals to values that many people don't hold very deeply and haven't put into effect in prosperous times. What is needed, they argue, is a radical transformation, a social revolution. I believe that this argument is a trap, ending up in immobility. Take, for example, David Dickson's book *The Politics of Alternative Technology*. Dickson defines alternative technologies in terms of the values they serve: Self-actualization, low energy consumption, and the furtherance of community. But then he argues that "An alternative technology can . . . only be successfully applied on a large-scale once an alternative form of society has been created."[33] This places Dickson in a double bind. He argues that no proposal for "community science" or for assessing the social and environmental impact of new technologies could possibly yield results without a social transformation; but he can't offer any hope for a social revolution. Unlike orthodox Marxists, he can't identify a social class that would make the revolution. People are far less likely to revolt to curtail production and consumption than they would to get their share of Western-style growth.

Dickson's paralysis may well reflect reality. There may be no way to create a majority desire for radical changes in energy and resource consumption. But one may try to escape this paralysis by assuming a dialectical relationship between technology, the class structure, and values. Then one can work for immediate changes that would work in a democratic direction. Several left-tending environmentalists contend, for example, that choosing solar power over nuclear power would strengthen forces working for decentralization of decision-making.

Making this argument brings us back to using democratic values in conjunction with projections of objective limits to growth. The projections of limits to come do not uniquely determine what our responses should be; we will have to make choices. There is no single value that can provide a simple answer to our choices. No one has yet demonstrated that limiting growth is desirable in itself. Nor can a new ethics magically make limiting consumption desirable in itself. Individual human desires tend toward more consumption, not less. Therefore, there is a limit to the amount of resources that can be diverted away from consumption in the West and turned over to the welfare state and to international equity. Yet, this argument doesn't make internationalism and the expansion of social services irrelevant. Both are democratic values—along with industrial democracy and equality—which we must use in deciding what savings or reductions to make.

III. Taking It Seriously: Planned Investment

USING THESE democratic values in conjunction with the projections of physical limits to growth, we can begin to identify the most pressing problems and to design solutions. Our values cannot replace or overshadow the argument from necessity. The probability of shortages is the firmest, most objective standard for convincing people that changes must be made and for defining the issues that must be faced first. Many people have already realized that energy is the most immediate

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issue, the prototype of other limits to growth in the future. The need to act on energy has been apparent at least since the 1973 oil boycott. The need to consider limits to growth in planning oil production and consumption comes from the fact that social and political limits overlap with ultimate physical limits, as they will in other issues like food production. There is no current physical shortage of energy. There are, however, short-run political, social, and economic limits to expanding industrialized nations' uses of energy. Western nations cannot go on importing an ever-increasing amount of Arab oil for fear of the economic and political consequences. Other nonrenewable energy sources are available, but they too have short-term political and economic limits. These short-term limits include the time needed for construction of new nuclear plants, coal-burning plants, and strip mines. Each new high-technology energy source also requires new investment in the transport and use of that energy. These investments of time, labor, and resources are often left out of the account by those who believe that there are no limits to energy use.

Some of these limits could be pushed back, by massive new investments, if there were not also clear-cut outer limits. The most immediate of these is that world oil reserves might be nearing depletion in about 50 years, depending on the rate of growth of oil consumption.[34] As far as coal is concerned, the outer limits of resource availability are far enough away to be discounted, but environmental factors may prevent a complete substitution of coal for oil. For example, shortages of water in the western United States pose limits to the idea of turning coal into gaseous and liquid fuels.[35] The presence of these outer limits means that investments in nonrenewable energy sources are transitional, not a long-term solution. Western society will have to make these investments, knowing that their use is limited, while simultaneously investing in solar energy and other renewable sources that might take their place. To increase investment in both nonrenewable and renewable sources to a level that would permit energy use to grow at 5 percent a year seems out of reach.[36] This implausibility is compounded by the notion that market forces could make these investments. Entrepreneurs would have to obtain money and start construction ten years in advance of the need, before they got a signal from price increases. Yet, if they waited until shortages developed, they would be too late. Taking these limits into account, one sees that there is no real alternative to controlling the growth of demand for energy.

And this requires more precise and effective tools than both the U.S. government and most ecologists have put forward. We have analyzed earlier the limits of individual self-restraint and the consequences of widespread abstinence in a market economy. The Carter administration's policy also depends heavily on forcing people to abstain. Carter chose to give individuals and corporations a greater self-interest in saving energy by raising the prices of oil and natural gas. This approach puts the whole burden on the ultimate consumer; the result is both ineffective and unfair. It is ineffective, because the final consumer usually cannot adjust his or her consumption to reduce waste that is built into the social structure. A person who commutes to work by car can only save energy by quitting, unless he or she can use public transport or move closer to work (and only then if our urban policy provides decent housing near work). Where consumers have little choice, industries can simply pass along higher costs while refusing to change their use of energy. Fine, an orthodox economist would say; the consumer will have to reduce some other expenditure, and that will still save energy.[37] But this is not true, if the consumer can increase her or his income—if she or he is a middle-class employee of a major corporation. The ineffectiveness of price increases here overlaps with their unfairness—low-paid workers and the lower middle class will have to curtail their consumption more, along with people on various forms of public assistance, if public benefits continue to lag behind energy prices. This offends our value of equality.

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Placing the emphasis on abstinence approaches energy conservation from the wrong direction; as a result, it calls for sacrifices that can be avoided. Sweden and West Germany have standards of living comparable to America's while using a third less energy. This figure gives an impression of the energy we waste, which goes far beyond personal sloppiness. Most of it is built into the economic and social structure, and is enshrined in the physical shape of our country. Eliminating it will require a drastic rebuilding of the physical fabric of the U.S., changing the physical layout and use of space as well as reconstructing existing buildings and erecting new ones. About 25 percent of our total energy consumption takes place in transportation.[38] Much of it is wasted in journeys that can be shortened by building houses closer to work and shopping. Suburban sprawl must be contained; properly designed row houses require less energy for heating and cooling than detached houses. It is extremely important to preserve and renovate the older cities of the Northeast and Midwest, because city dwellers use significantly less energy for commuting and living.[39] Many energy-saving technologies require strong, reasonably dense cities; two examples are mass transit and the use of waste heat from power plants and industry to heat homes and offices. Many proponents of limited growth, such as the Ehrlichs, ignore these energy savings because of antiurban bias. If pushed, they might argue that new technologies like solar heating will require people to spread out. Leonard Rodberg says this isn't true:

> Cost analyses suggest that solar heating and electricity units are most efficient on a community scale where they can serve hundreds or thousands of people, *not* on the scale of the individual home. Scale economies in solar collection systems that can track the sun, and in energy storage units, are among the clear benefits of such community-level scaling.[40]

Popular discussions of energy often concentrate on consumers and ignore industry and offices. Landlords and corporations have designed buildings that require the simultaneous use of heating and air conditioning, in which windows don't open and a single room cannot be illuminated without turning on all the lights on a floor. Avoiding such energy-wasting errors in new buildings of all types, and repairing them in old ones, could save ". . . 12.5 million barrels of petroleum per day (equal to one-third the current national energy use). . . ," according to the American Institute of Architects.[41] Another essential dimension of the rebuilding and reorganizing of the American economy to save energy is the substitution of solar and other renewable energy sources for petroleum.

Investing to Live Within Limits

THE KEY to whether this rebuilding will take place is investment. It will take a huge commitment of labor, resources and money to make the transition to an economy that can fill our need for jobs and goods without exhausting the world's diminishing reserves of fossil fuels. Only one component of this commitment, the program of energy conservation in buildings outlined by the American Institute of Architects, would require $415 billion through 1990. To reach the level of investment needed to avert disaster, there will have to be a substantial direct investment in rebuilding the society; in addition, energy will have to be taken into account in every public and private investment decision, from urban policy to defense spending.

These investments cannot be obtained through existing capital markets and corporate retained earnings. The oil companies claim they need larger profits for new exploration—and then turn around and spend their profits to acquire such non-energy companies as Marcor to assure their corporate immortality. The lead time for energy projects is so long and the demand projections are so uncertain that we cannot wait for rising prices to cajole corporations into new investments. As far as conservation is concerned, companies will often choose to invest instead in expanding production. Even if conservation were to yield lower costs, a

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company could decide that conservation didn't offer a high enough return on the capital required. Corporations often can pass on energy costs to their consumers. The fact that there is unused capital in existing plants becomes an additional deterrent to raising new capital for conservation or solar energy.

Consequently, government will have to guide the necessary investments and will have to make some of them directly. The failure to plan for these investments is a major deficiency in Carter's energy program. He has subordinated investment to other policies; he was even willing to return to the public the proceeds of any taxes levied to reduce demand, when the proceeds of these taxes could appropriately be used for investment and research.[42] Instead of investing in solar water heating, which has been shown to be technologically and economically feasible, Carter's 1979 budget cuts outlays and leaves the development of this technology to private enterprise.[43] This decision inevitably will delay the application of solar heating. We will have to demand that the federal government provide some of the investment in using renewable energy sources, rather than restricting it to long-range research. Some observers have proposed federal subsidies, but Leonard Rodberg of the Public Resource Center argues that subsidies would be ineffective and restricted to relatively wealthy consumers.[44] He recommends full federal funding for solar installations, with local planning of the actual installations. In seconding this proposal, I would argue for mandatory trade-union involvement in the planning, and also for a role for local antipoverty agencies.

There will be much resistance to direct federal investment; there will also be many efforts to subvert it into a corporate boondoggle, like Rockefeller's proposal of a $100 billion fund for research into exotic capital-intensive projects such as nuclear fusion and coal gasification. Struggles over these points are likely to delay the necessary rebuilding of our physical fabric. Consequently, we need to explore some of the mild forms of investment planning that do exist. The federal government now provides a substantial part of America's new physical investment through tax expenditures, notably the investment tax credit. We could amend the investment tax credit, making it selective. It could encourage energy-saving investments and discourage energy-intensive projects. Apply it to rebuilding plants and office buildings to save energy; apply it to solar and other forms of renewable energy. Deny it to new industrial capacity that is energy-intensive, such as aluminum, and perhaps to plastics and chemicals that are based on petroleum. Deny it to new plants and offices that don't meet certain standards of energy engineering. We can use it to give extra encouragement to low-capital investments as well, investments in the decentralized technologies that Third World countries can adopt.[45] Another immediate objective should be to remove anomalies in the tax structure that penalize solar energy and other energy-saving technologies. For example, a solar unit adds to the cost of a house or apartment building, and therefore increases its assessed valuation and real estate taxes. The cost of the unit should be subtracted from the assessed valuation. In these ways, we could stop subsidizing forms of development that make the problem worse, and start rigging the existing tax and investment structure in favor of new energy sources and conservation. Ultimately, of course, we need national investment planning or a national investment bank that can carry out these policies systematically.

Investment: Reconciling Limits and Jobs

ONE OF the main reasons for emphasizing investment is that it offers us a chance to reconcile slower growth of energy use and GNP with our urgent need for full employment. Rebuilding houses, apartment buildings, offices, and public buildings to conserve energy would generate thousands of new jobs. Many of these jobs will not require extensive training; they would fit the needs of unskilled people. A Federal Energy Administration report ". . . stressed that employment associated with energy conserva-

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tion techniques is local, low- to moderately skilled, and concentrated in or near urbanized areas which are experiencing the most acute unemployment problems."[46] These jobs won't go automatically to unemployed teen-agers. Direct federal funding must be used so that a fair share of the work is directed to urban areas, and to antipoverty agencies, workers' cooperatives, and small contractors that agree to hire a high proportion of unemployed youths. Building and installing solar energy collectors also will create jobs in metal fabrication and construction. Here, the investment issue is the balance between industrialization and local manufacturing by small contractors and workers' cooperatives. Sheet metal workers and contractors insist that they have the capacity to do the job. Local assembly might mean using more labor in manufacturing, and less energy in transportation. It would be more decentralized and less dominated by giant corporations—*if* (and only if) the federal government prevented the energy and steel corporations from starting subsidiaries or buying up the companies that survived the first competitive stage of the industry. The argument for industrialization is that it might yield lower costs. If we follow this argument, it will be important to locate much of the production in the old steel valleys of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, where steel-mill closures have left behind unemployed workers and vulnerable towns. Using factory methods would make the industry more capital-intensive, but on the whole workers would get a higher proportion of the money spent on conservation and renewable energy sources than they do in conventional energy generation and petrochemicals.

Several democratic action groups have now begun to build a politics around the proposition that conserving energy and using renewable energy sources can create jobs. In addition to the jobs created directly, these groups argue that if high-energy production is restricted, consumers will have to buy goods and services that use less energy and thereby need more labor per unit of output. Among these groups are Environmentalists For Full Employment and the Midwest Academy.[47] The Midwest Academy is acting as catalyst for a national energy coalition; they plan to convene a national conference in the summer of 1978 to draft a national energy program. A coalition has already been created to push for Solarcal, a public authority whose purpose would be to create a solar energy industry in California. Trade unions, environmentalists, consumer advocates, and civil rights groups have joined these coalitions, or are being approached by them. These efforts deserve support. If such a coalition isn't formed, it will be easy for capital-intensive, energy-intensive corporations to continue to dominate our energy policies, by claiming that growth in their industries is necessary to provide jobs. Without a national effort to create jobs in ways that are ecologically sounder and that provide more jobs for the capital invested, workers in those industries will have little choice but to support management's demands. The success of business's tactic was shown graphically by the NAACP statement on energy and jobs in January 1978.

Without such a coalition, both environmentalists and democrats who desire full employment and greater equality will suffer from intellectual and political weaknesses. As we have seen, the true believers in stopping growth, such as Herman Daly, the Ehrlichs and the Meadows, often take a purely negative stance. They are largely unaware of the impact of individual abstinence on the economy as a whole and on class tensions. These weaknesses come from their urge to be above politics. If the true believers persist in these views, they will not get the social changes that might avert the disasters they predict. The wealthy will pay lip-service to their rhetoric but use their economic power to go on consuming; the rest of the population will have to ignore these environmentalists to survive from day to day. In a coalition, environmentalists can help plan a limited growth that will create jobs and restructure society instead of devastating it.

The believers in democracy and full employment must also reassess their policies in the light of limited, balanced, or organic

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growth. The issue must be taken seriously. The combination of outer limits with short-term political and organizational restrictions on energy, resources, and food production means that we cannot continue to make constant growth the motor of Western societies. The Keynesian tools on which we have relied to expand the economy and create jobs have serious deficiencies in a limited growth situation As we near the social and political limits to growth, we get less out of each successive priming of the pump. Keynesianism is too crude to guide the growth that is possible toward the creation of the maximum number of jobs. Much of the money generated by tax cuts has ended up in personal and corporate expenditures—such as the current boom in expensive suburban housing—that will make it harder to save energy and live within limits in the future. Growth cannot be slowed down properly by Keynesian tools, or allowed to slow down as a result of changes in demand within a Keynesian economy; in either case, the result is more unemployment. The alternative policy is to restructure the economy to meet the real shortages that lie ahead. Energy is the prototype of these shortages. Our energy policy must emphasize conservation and renewable sources; both approaches will require massive public investment, not just changes in individual habits. These investments must be planned, using the federal budget for direct investments and changing indirect subsidies such as the investment tax credit.

These conclusions need not demoralize us. Although we must abandon our dream of a world without scarcity in which there would be a total transformation of the human personality,[48] there is still room for democratic action. There is still room to expand those social services that use much labor and relatively few resources. Democratic concepts of participation and equality remain valid. The greatest barriers to living up to these values will occur internationally, where even the new economic order demanded by Third World nations wouldn't come close to ending disparities in income and resource consumption. It would be pointless to let our justifiable feelings of guilt about these inequalities steer our efforts toward massive aid programs; massive transfers of goods would disrupt the economies of both the recipients and the industrialized nations. Instead, we should concentrate our efforts more at home, trying to develop and invest in the low-energy, low-capital technologies that can create more jobs here and in the Third World. Limiting growth is not a negative but a positive task; it is the job of rebuilding industrialized societies, not just slowing their growth. □

Notes

I would like to thank Marilyn Nelkin and David Bensman for their help and encouragement, and Horst Brand, Robert Heilbroner, and Robert Lekachman for their helpful comments on an earlier draft of this article.

[1]Donella H. Meadows et al., *The Limits to Growth* (New York: New American Library/Signet, 1972), pp. 26-27.

[2]This sentence contains two necessarily sloppy words: "Growth" and "our." Many commentators have pointed out that GNP contains anomalies; but until there is a better measurement of the production of useful goods and services, I can't avoid talking about growth of GNP. As often as possible, I will talk about the growth of energy use and of jobs, whose growth or declines are not rigidly connected to the growth of GNP. "Our" refers to Western people sharing a belief in full employment and democratic values. My remarks pertain more to the U.S. than to Western Europe; Europeans have less room to implement the ideas outlined below, because they have less energy waste to reduce and because they are more dependent on imported raw materials.

[3]H. S. D. Cole, et al., *Models of Doom: A Critique of the Limits to Growth* (New York: Universe, 1973), p. 132.

[4]*Models of Doom*, pp. 6, 131, 10.

[5]Herman Kahn, et al., *The Next 200 Years* (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1976), pp. 6-7.

[6]*The Next 200 Years*, p. 60.

[7]*The Next 200 Years*, p. 4.

[8]*The Next 200 Years*, p. 50.

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[9]Mihajlo Mesarovic and Eduard Pestel, *Mankind at the Turning Point* (New York: New American Library/Signet, 1974), p. 55.

[10]*Mankind at the Turning Point*, p. 7.

[11]*Mankind at the Turning Point*, p. 127.

[12]See Peter Grose, "Report at U.N. Says Rich-Poor Gap Can Be Narrowed by The Year 2000," *New York Times*, October 14, 1976.

[13]United Nations (pamphlet), "The Future of the World Economy" (New York, 1976), p. 7.

[14]Jan Tinbergen (coordinator), *RIO: Reshaping the International Order* (New York: Dutton, 1976), p. 93.

[15]"The Future of the World Economy," p. 9.

[16]Roger Revelle, "The Resources Available for Agriculture," *Scientific American*, September 1976, p. 178.

[17]Paul R. and Anne H. Ehrlich, *The End of Affluence* (New York: Ballantine 1974), p. 256. Their italics.

[18]*The End of Affluence*, p. 81.

[19]Hugh Stretton, *Capitalism, Socialism and the Environment* (London and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976, p. 16.

[20]Rufus E. Miles Jr., *Awakening from the American Dream* (New York: Universe Books, 1976), p. 203.

[21]Ervin Laszlo et al., *Goals for Mankind* (New York: Dutton, 1977), p. 303.

[22]Robert Moss, "Let's Out for No. 1," *New York Times Magazine*, May 1, 1977, p. 31.

[23]*RIO*, p. 16.

[24]The issue of the appropriate models for non-Western growth has a sizable impact on Western obligations to provide aid. We need much more evidence on whether Chinese and Tanzanian models show that village-based, nonmarket development is possible. If they do, then there is no obligation to assist high-technology forms of development—especially if they lead to social dislocation or waste.

[25]Nathan Keyfitz, "World Resources and the World Middle Class," *Scientific American*, July 1976, pp. 23-35.

[26]*The New 200 Years*, p. 40.

[27]Robert L. Heilbroner, *An Inquiry into The Human Prospect* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974), p. 43.

[28]*RIO*, p. 15.

[29]*RIO, p. 113.*

[30]Bilateral trade might be less feasible for European nations than for the U.S., because Europe is more dependent on international trade for raw materials.

[31]*An Inquiry into the Human Prospect*, p. 87.

[32]*Capitalism, Socialism and the Environment*, p. 4.

[33]David Dickson, *The Politics of Alternative Technology* (New York: Universe Books, 1974), p. 99.

[34]*Models of Doom*, pp. 91-97. This estimate follows M. King Hubbert, who estimates that if oil use continues to grow at a rate of 7.8 percent a year, half of the world's oil will be used up by 1990-2000, and a decline of world production of oil would set in. Barry Commoner makes two different assumptions: no growth in American consumption of oil, and higher estimates of potential American reserves, drawn from A. D. Zapp. From these (questionable) assumptions, he predicts that the U.S. could subsist for 50 years on its own domestically produced oil. Barry Commoner, *The Poverty of Power* (New York: Knopf, 1976), pp. 51-57.

[35]*The Poverty of Power*, p. 73.

[36]Total world consumption of energy grew at 5 percent a year between 1950-68, as compared with the 7.8 percent rate of growth in oil consumption given above. *Models of Doom*, p. 91.

[37]Not necessarily. The consumer's shift in expenditure may mean that very little energy is saved, if the consumer saves on a low-energy good or service to purchase energy directly or to purchase a high-energy good.

[38]*The Poverty of Power*, p. 155.

[39]Peter Kihss, "Metropolitan Area Relatively Efficient In Its Use of Energy," *New York Times*, May 2, 1977, p. 1.

[40]Leonard Rodberg, "Solar Energy: Is There A Public Option," *Conference on Alternative State and Local Public Policies*, #10, January 1978, p. 5. Rodberg's emphasis.

[41]Environmentalists for Full Employment (pamphlet), "Jobs and Energy" (Washington, D.C., 1977), p. 7.

[42]If these taxes aren't replaced by rationing, which could be made more equitable than using price increases to discourage consumption.

[43]Steven Rattner, "Sharp Rise in Outlays Reflects Carter Stress on Fossil Fuels," *New York Times,* January 24, 1978, p. 17.

[44]"Solar Energy: Is There a Public Option," p. 5.

[45]See L. S. Stavrianos, The Promise of the Coming Dark Age (San Francisco: Freeman, 1976); E. F. Schumacher, Small is Beautiful (New York: Harper & Row, 1973).

[46]"Jobs and Energy," p. 10. The report cited is *Conservation as a Gas Utility Supply Option* (Washington, D.C.: Federal Energy Administration, 1976).

[47]Environmentalists For Full Employment, Room 300, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036; The Midwest Academy, 600 West Fullerton Ave., Chicago, Ill., 60614.

[48]Cf. Michael Harrington's comment: ". . . people have tried to argue that a spaceship earth forced to ration all of its resources would be a socialist earth. It would obviously have to be a pliant earth, a managed earth. But I think it would be psychologically, culturally, and, in the broadest sense of the word, humanly, profoundly at variance with socialist ideas of emancipation." In Willem L. Oltmans, ed., *On Growth* (New York: Putman/Capricorn, 1974), p. 301. □

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Kenneth J. Arrow

A Cautious Case for Socialism

The discussion of any important social question must involve an inextricable mixture of fact and value. The fundamental impulse to change and especially to great change is a perception of present wrong and a vision of potential right. The initial impulse must still be checked for feasibility; we live in a world of limits, and what we desire may not be attainable or it may be attainable only at the expense of other high values. There is an ancient warning, "Be careful what you dream of when young; your dreams may come true!"

With the painter Braque, then, I can say, "I like the rule that corrects the emotion." But that presupposes a strong emotion to begin with; and it is there I would like to begin.

Values and emotions are best apprehended personally, and I will speak of my own attitudes and their development. This does not mean that my values are all that matter, even to me. I hold that others are free and autonomous human beings, each capable of developing his or her own value system of equal worth and respect to my own. But by that very token, the values of others must always retain an element of mystery. The equal but different emotionally based axiological drives of others can never be fully communicated. This is not to say that they cannot be partly understood; historical study, sociological inquiry, intellectual debate, and the many dimensions of the political process are all ways in which we do communicate values. But my own values are the starting point, though not the terminus. In the oft-quoted words of the sage Hillel, "If I am not for myself, then who is for me?" to which he immediately added, "and if I am not for others, then who am I?"

This methodological preface is by way of apology for the extent to which this paper is an intellectual autobiography. Notice the adjective, "intellectual." Anyone who knows me will not be surprised; I have always preferred the contemplative to the active life. I prefer the freedom to see matters from several viewpoints, to appreciate ironies, and indeed to change my opinion as I learn something new. To be politically active means to surrender this freedom. I say nothing against activism—for others. It is only through the committed that necessary changes come. But each to his own path.

The great issues of socialism and capitalism became alive to me, as to so many others, in the Great Depression. My own family was severely affected. A precocious high-school boy, brought up with excellent newspapers and a family very interested in world events, could hardly help reflecting on the system and its failures. They seemed obvious enough. The long queues of unemployed at the soup kitchens shown in the newspapers and the newsreels, the waves of bank failures and the personal tragedies of the depositors, the

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gasping struggles of relatives who tried to run small businesses, and the ominous connection between unemployment and the rise of Nazism were convincing evidence that the current economic system was a disaster. The idea, sometimes bruited about then, that unemployment was the fault of the unemployed—that they were lazy or incompetent or whatnot—struck me as laughable. I regret to say that this concept has been revived by some of my fellow economists.

I was impressed not only by the personal tragedies of unemployment but also the clearly anomalous coexistence of desperate needs with keeping idle the resources, men, and machines, which could meet those needs. I was of course economically illiterate, though considering the standard pre-Keynesian textbook economics this may have been an advantage. One day I remember working out to my temporary satisfaction an explanation why the capitalist system could not achieve full employment; it was in effect a Keynesian explanation except that there was no investment at all. I realized, however, that it was a little too powerful, since there could never have been any prosperity.

What gave bite and impetus to these reflections on the rottenness of the times was the presence of an alternative possibility. It has become a truism that a scientific theory, however incapable of explaining the facts, will never be displaced except by another theory. It is even more true that a social system, political or economic, however bad its consequences, will be replaced only if there is a vision of a better system. The idea of socialism was easily available. One read about it even in textbooks and newspapers, as well as in the that major source of education, the public library. Here we did seem to have a resolution of our difficulties. Surely, a rationally organized, centrally coordinated economic system could avoid the instability of the capitalist economy and the terrible human and material costs of unemployment.

Further, there was such an economy. The Soviet Union was building and expanding, there was no unemployment, at a time when the advanced capitalist economies were spiraling downward or at best stagnating. The *New York Times* was the source of this favorable information, much more to be believed than the Communist party pamphlets passed out on the streets. To be sure, the Hearst newspapers were telling us about famine and repression in the Ukraine; but who would believe them? My family was hardly radical; indeed, they changed from Republicans to New Deal Democrats only under the influence of poverty. But the Hearst newspapers were not respectable; my unwillingness to trust them as against the *Times* had perfectly respectable middle-class justification.

I have spoken so far as if efficiency were the main value. Indeed, it was true that the apparent sheer irrationality of the workings of capitalism was a basic condemnation. But as I observed, read, and reflected, the capitalist drive for profits seemed to become a major source of evil. Clearly, the individualistic profit drive had something to do with the uncoordinated inefficiency of capitalism. But, more, the drive for profits had other manifestations. The Nye committee, a congressional investigating committee, was engaged in a major investigation of the munitions industry; its influence over governments in creating the fears that improved its sales seemed to be well documented. The economic explanations of imperialism were virtually standard. Charles Beard and other historians had accustomed us all through their books to seeking an economic explanation of all political actions. The Constitution represented a certain set of economic interests, the Civil War a conflict, sometimes called "irrepressible," of different profit-seeking groups. Most serious of all, World War I, a tragic living memory, was clearly caused, at least in great measure, by competition among the capitalist interests of the different powers.

It was in this area of political-economic interactions that Marxist doctrine was most appealing. I was never a Marxist in any literal sense, unlike a great many of my fellow

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students at the City College, in New York. Irving Kristol has written an evocative article on the intensity of intellectual life among the anti-Stalinist Marxists who foregathered in Alcove One and listed the many eminent social scientists and literary critics who emerged from this training. It would appear a Marxist background is an essential prerequisite for the development of a neoconservative thinker.

I could not follow Marxist doctrine very literally for a number of reasons. The labor theory of value was a stumbling block even before I studied economics with any seriousness; there were too many obvious phenomena that it ignored. Nevertheless, the insight Marxist theory gave into history and particularly as to political events was striking: the state as the executive committee of the bourgeoisie, the class interpretation of political and social conflicts, and the interpretation of war and imperialism as the conflict of competing national capitalist interests were illuminating and powerful. It appeared more profound than the alternative versions of the economic interpretation of history; they seemed to be mere muckraking, the behavior of venal individuals. Marxism put the system rather than the individual into the foreground.

What I drew from this thinking was an argument for system change. The basic criterion for change was moral and ethical. I did not accept ideas of historical inevitability. What the Marxist analysis did say to me, at least then, was that the system of production according to profit established vested interests in destructive activity, most especially war and imperialism, but also oppression of workers and destruction of freedom. I do not believe I ever accepted the theory that racial discrimination was the result of capitalist endeavors to divide the working class, but I certainly accepted the general belief that the capitalist class would overthrow democracy rather than lose its power, as it had done in Italy and Germany and was then striving to do in Spain.

Thus, beside the efficiency value, the values of freedom and the avoidance of war were vital in my attitude toward socialism. The two were and are intimately linked in my mind. Being killed is, after all, a rather extreme form of deprivation of freedom, and in a typical modern war, the killer is subject to as much compulsion as the killed. I tended therefore to a rather pacifist position. This position, to be sure, began increasingly to separate me from a revolutionary socialist position.

On the value of freedom, I don't think I ever thought it through; it was just a value that was taken for granted. Obviously, an American education inculcates such a value strongly. However, I was naive or conscientious enough to take it very seriously and to be shocked at examples of its denial. Discrimination against blacks—denial of their political rights, segregation in housing and employment—was the most blatant case domestically; remember that lynching still existed. Imperial control of the United States, as in the Philippines, and, much more extensively, by Great Britain in India and Africa, served to demonstrate that political freedom had narrow limits under capitalism.

The freedom of workers seemed to me much restricted. Strike-breaking by fairly direct and brutal methods, as well as more subtle forms of economic pressure, was a common event. Even apart from overt conflict, the regular operation of the factory appeared as a form of regimentation and a denial of individual freedom—an implication then widely accepted, expressed in such movies as Chaplin's *Modern Times* and René Clair's *A Nous La Liberté* and, more subtly and profoundly, in Lewis Mumford's *Technics and Civilisation*, then very famous and still worthy of rereading.

A broader and less direct form of control flowed from the concentration of control in American industry, indeed capitalist industry everywhere. The importance of relatively few large industrial and financial corporations did not need much documentation, and numerous investigations documented their scandals. But massive support for the more scholarly minded came from Berle and

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Means's *The Modern Corporation and Private Property,* which established not merely the concentration of the productive sector into large firms but also the concentration of control within those firms. Even the capitalist stockholders were deprived of power, if not wealth.

The absorption of the economy by a small elite implied that the formal democracy and freedom was increasingly a sham; the major decisions on which human welfare depended were being made by a few, in their own interests. The same process had another implication, as Marx had argued long before; production was in effect already being carried on in socialized enterprises, so that the shift to a completely socialist economy would be that much easier.

As some of my examples indicate, I did not find any sharp line to draw between the values of freedom and of equality. The typical example of lack of freedom was a great inequality of power. Much is made these days of the alleged opposition of freedom and equality; but I would have regarded the two as close to identical in many contexts. As for inequality of income, I took it for granted that it would be reduced under socialism by the abolition of the income category of profits.

Finally, there was a strong antipathy to an economic and social system based on selfish and competing motivations. I eagerly sought confirmation in the works of contemporary anthropology, such as Margaret Mead's *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*, for the proposition that cooperation was at least as natural as competition.

My pacifist views coincided in a natural way with these broader motivational assumptions. Like many others of the time, I was strongly attracted by Gandhi's nonviolent campaigns against British rule. The underlying assumption was the common humanity of ruler and ruled; the appeals to cooperative and altruistic motives seemed to have at least some success as against the simple selfish exercise of power.

To sum up, the basic values that motivated my preference for socialism over capitalism were (1) efficiency in making sure that all resources were used, (2) the avoidance of war and other political corruptions of the pursuit of profits, (3) the achievement of freedom from control by a small elite, (4) equality of income and power, and (5) encouragement of cooperative as opposed to competitive motives in the operation of society.

From the perspective of greater education and experience and with 40 years of history, my understanding of the relation between these values and the desirability of socialism has altered. Many countervailing considerations have been raised by further analysis and knowledge of the facts.

One problem that I did not face was highlighted by history almost immediately. If capitalism was to be reprehended for its concentration of control and consequent inequality of power and lack of freedom for the average man, what would happen under socialism? Did not state ownership imply or at least permit overwhelming concentration of power in the hands of a political elite? Soviet Communism pushed these questions into our consciousness. For me, the Moscow trials of 1935-36 were a dramatic, even traumatic turning point. It was clear that the old Bolsheviks were unjustly convicted, and their confessions only increased the horror, since it spoke of barbaric pressures. I reflected, too, that in the improbable event that the charges of treason were true, the Stalin regime was equally condemned; for what could induce those who had risked all under the Czars to create this new world to turn against it save a deep sense of its evil? However the facts were interpreted, they were not compatible with the idea that the Soviet Union was a democracy or was even moving in that direction. Differences of opinion, even among socialists, were not being tolerated. I had not believed that the Soviet Union was a genuine democracy at any time, but its political backwardness could easily be explained by history and the ring of quite genuine enemies it had. But now it appeared that as the generation raised under socialism came to adulthood and as the Soviet Union grew stronger vis-à-vis its enemies, the repression grew greater, not less.

The true enormity of the Soviet tyranny

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was revealed only in time. But from my point of view, the challenge to socialism was already reasonably clear. At a minimum, the socialist economy did not guarantee democracy and individual freedom. I had the naive idea that in the absence of a profit-making class, there would be no class interested in achieving power over others. It became clear that this view was hardly adequate. The worse problem was the possibility that socialism, by concentrating control of the economy in the state apparatus, facilitated authoritarianism or even made it inevitable. I return to this vital challenge below.

I became seriously interested in the study of economics only after beginning graduate study around 1940. Needless to say, learning something of the workings of the economic system and of the logic of neoclassical economics had a considerable effect on my attitude toward socialism. George Stigler remarked once that the study of economics is a highly conservatizing force. To some extent this is true, but only to the extent that any increase in knowledge may lead to greater realization of limitations. The inner coherence of the economy, the way markets and the pursuit of self-interest could in principle achieve a major degree of coordination without any explicit exchange of information—in short, the valid elements in Adam Smith's doctrine of the invisible hand—became important possibilities that qualified a simple view of the inefficiency of markets. Similarly, the facts of long-term economic growth in spite of the contemporary economic debacles had to register—though, to be sure, one could scarcely ask for a greater testimonial to the creative power of capitalism than was already contained in the *Communist Manifesto*.

My immediate reaction was to interpret neoclassical economic theory and particularly the then new and rapidly developing discipline of welfare economics as pointing to an ideal efficient economy rather than the actual one, marked both by massive unemployment and by monopolistic distortion. Socialism was the way in which the ideal market was to be achieved. This doctrine was held by many, including especially the professor here at Columbia to whom I owe so much, both intellectually and personally, Harold Hotelling. Graduate education in economics at Columbia at that time, just before our entrance into World War II, seemed curiously designed to emphasize the ideal nature of neoclassical theory. The dominating voices, Wesley Mitchell, J. M. Clark, and Arthur F. Burns, held that neoclassical theory had little descriptive value. Though Clark and Burns, at least, certainly had no support for socialism, their views, when taken into conjunction with the theorems of welfare economics, resonated with my convictions that socialism could yield a more efficient economy.

Finally, the development of Keynesian economics and, after the war, its gradually increasing application changed the nature of the efficiency discussion. In true Hegelian fashion, capitalist instability and the socialist counterattack seemed to be synthesized: it seemed possible to have an economy that retained much of capitalist drive and initiative and yet gave room for the government to intervene to avoid at least the worst inefficiencies of unemployment and the idling of other resources. I accepted provisionally what seemed to be a widespread consensus in the euphoria of postwar economic growth. The state had an active role to play in maintaining effective demand and in dealing with the many imperfections of the market system revealed by theoretical welfare economics—the overcoming of market failures and monopoly and the realization of economies of scale. These interventions should take the form of relatively impersonal measures, taxes and expenditures, rather than detailed controls and direct regulation. The higher taxes meant that the government was automatically engaged in redistributing, and some of us felt that it should go much further.

I have spoken of a provisional acceptance. I still felt it important to explore more deeply the possibility that socialism was a superior possibility. I was more aware of the complexities of operation of a socialist system and

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sought to develop more deeply the theory of such a system. I also sought to explore more fully the criteria for a democratic social organization. These matters could be thought of as matters for slow reflection and long-term analysis, so long as the economy seemed to be performing so well and the political process seemed to be responding, however slowly, to demands for improvements in efficiency, redistribution, and the overcoming of market defects. The apparent pause in economic growth, the crisis in stabilization policy occasioned by the current inflationary threats and realities, and the loss of purpose in redistributional measures all combine to raise anew the question of alternatives to capitalism. In many of our sister democracies, the issue is much more closely on the agenda than it is here. Beyond that there is the large fraction of the world where socialism and authoritarianism coexist in varying degrees of comfort. And then, since, to twist a phrase of Marx's, every historical phenomenon appears as both tragedy and farce, we have the widespread solemn use of the word "socialism" to cover some of the most absurd travesties of that term.

Let me spend the remaining time in reexamining briefly the case for socialism from the viewpoint of the five values mentioned earlier: efficiency, separating political decisions from selfish economic interests, freedom, equality of income and power, and the stress on cooperative as against individualistic motives. These are not balanced remarks; only the favorable side will be presented. Perhaps on another occasion I will present the contrary case. The case for socialism from each value viewpoint is much more refined and complex than I originally thought, and there are many qualifications that must be made. But I still consider that the argument can be made.

For reasons of time, I will deal only briefly with the last two points. With regard to equality of income, let me first remark that I am taking it to be a good, other things being equal. It can be objected that the drive for equality may dull incentives, and the net result will be a reduction in everyone's real income. This is a legitimate instrumental objection but not an objection to the value presumption in favor of equality as such. Many current thinkers object to distributive equality on principle, on the grounds that it contradicts freedom of property. This is a large subject; I simply state my conviction that property is itself a social contrivance and cannot be taken as an ultimate value, indeed, that institutions that lead to gross inequalities are affronts to the equal dignity of humans and can only be accepted as necessary evils.

It certainly seems as obvious as can be that a socialist economy can achieve much closer income equality than a capitalist economy. The category of profits is absent. While we now understand that most inequality in income is due to inequality of so-called labor incomes, it is certainly true that the ability to acquire profits increases inequality. Further, the higher end of the income of professionals and executives is largely a rent in the economic sense and would be unnecessary in a socialist society. One needn't ask for utopian dreams of virtually complete equality of income.

In a world of any complexity, there must necessarily be both antagonistic and cooperative elements. The model *laissez-faire* world of total self-interest would not survive for ten minutes; its actual working depends upon an intricate network of reciprocal obligations, even among competing firms and individuals. But the capitalist system is structured so as to minimize cooperative endeavor. The worker is a factor of production, a purchased item, not a part of a team. The attempts to handle externalities in recent years have led to interesting resistances; antipollution regulations are perceived as a threat to profits, not a social gain. Again, socialism is far from a magic cure. Each suborganization, for example industrial plants, will have its own proximate goals, which will not mesh completely with those of others. But the system should permit a greater internalization of broader goals. It should be

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easier for a plant to regard product safety as one of its socially valued outputs.

The comparative economic efficiency of capitalism and socialism remains one of the most controversial areas. The classical socialist argument is that the anarchy of production under capitalism leads to great wastage. An appeal to the virtues of the price system is, in fact, only a partial answer to this critique. The central argument, which implies the efficiency of a competitive economic system, presupposes that all relevant goods are available at prices that are the same for all participants and that supplies and demands of all goods balance. Now virtually all economic decisions have implications for supplies and demands on future markets. The concept of capital, the very root of the term "capitalism," refers to the setting-aside of resources for use in future production and sale. Hence, goods to be produced in the future are effectively economic commodities today. For efficient resource allocation, the prices of future goods should be known today. But they are not. Markets for current goods exist and enable a certain coherence between supply and demand there. But very few such markets exist for delivery of goods in the future. Hence, plans made by different agents may be based on inconsistent assumptions about the future. Investment plans may be excessive or inadequate to meet future demands or to employ the future labor force.

The nonexistence of future markets is no doubt linked to uncertainty about the future. But this points to an even more severe shortcoming of the actual capitalist system compared with an ideally efficient economic system. The uncertainties themselves are relevant commodities and should be priced in such an economy. Only a handful of insurance policies and, to a limited extent, the stock market serve to meet the need for an efficient allocation of risk-bearing.

In the ideal theory of the competitive economy, market-clearing prices serve as the communication links that bring into coherence the widely dispersed knowledge about the needs and production possibilities of the members of the economy. In the absence of suitable markets, other coordinating and communicating mechanisms are needed for efficiency. These come close to defining the socialist economy, although admittedly wide variations in the meaning of that expression are possible.

As I have already suggested, the existence of idle resources is a prime example of coordination failure. The experience of the Communist countries bears on this point. With all their difficulties and inefficiencies, and they are not few, recurrent or prolonged unemployment is not one. A graph of economic activity in the United States is, under the best of circumstances, jagged and spasmodic, that of the Soviet Union much smoother. Fluctuations there are, as there must be in any complex dynamic system. But the planning, however inept, serves to keep the basic resources and their uses in line.

The sophisticated antisocialist reply to this argument is not to deny it but to emphasize that a socialist system is not an ideal resource-allocating mechanism either. Much is made of the obvious inefficiencies of the Communist countries, though the Soviet growth rate and technical development has on occasion caused fear and trembling and overall still averages above the United States rate. As all too frequently happens in the social sciences, no clear-cut dominance pattern of efficiency can be found either way. All that can be said is that socialism is clearly a viable economic system, contrary to what many would have asserted in the not-too-distant past, and it does not release energies and productivity far beyond the capitalist norm.

I have referred rather vaguely to the corruption of the political system by narrow economic interests as one of the evils of capitalism that might be avoided under socialism. More explicitly, a democratic polity is supposed to be based on egalitarian distribution of political power. In a system where virtually all resources are available for a price, economic power can be translated into political power by channels too obvious for mention. In a capitalist society, economic

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power is very unequally distributed, and hence democratic government is inevitably something of a sham. In a sense, the maintained ideal of democracy makes matters worse, for it adds the tensions of hypocrisy to the inequality of power.

My early assumption that only capitalists would have an incentive to influence democratic decisions was too simple. Everyone in an economy has an economic interest. It is also true that individuals have interests and attitudes that do not derive from their economic improvement and may even oppose it. But it is today a widespread doctrine, held by conservatives as well as socialists, that concentrated economic interests are more than proportionally powerful in the political process. George Stigler and his colleagues have maintained with great vigor that regulation of industries is usually carried out in the interests of the regulated and is not infrequently originated by them. The reasons offered are perfectly in accordance with ordinary economic principles; there are economies of scale in the political process, so that a small economic interest for each of a large number of individuals is less likely to get represented than a large interest by a small number.

So long as the state power can be democratically run, much of this distortion of the democratic process should be minimized under socialism. Income inequalities should be greatly reduced. Economic power deriving from managerial control rather than income should be less easily translatable into political power than under a regime of legally and practically autonomous corporations.

We come then, finally, to what is probably the most serious of all the concerns about socialism. Is it in fact compatible with freedom and democracy? It is the fear that socialism may bring tyranny that has inhibited so many of us from being more active advocates.

It is noteworthy that when Joseph Schumpeter wrote on *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy,* he affirmed that socialism, which he thoroughly disliked, was fully compatible with political democracy. It is only perhaps with Friedrich von Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* that the association of capitalism and democracy became a staple of the procapitalist argument. The association itself, however, was not new; it was one of the standard Marxist views, though not held by all. The hypothesis was that the resistance of capitalists to the coming of socialism will lead to the subversion of democracy by them. At least the transition will require the "dictatorship of the proletariat," a phrase whose ambiguities have been only too well clarified by history. This Marxist view indeed gives credit to capitalism for the origins of democracy; it is an appropriate political form, a parallel to the ideas of free contract. So long as the "contradictions" of the system are not too sharp, the nominal equalization of political power offers no threat because economic power is so preponderant. But democracy will decline with the failure of capitalism. The experience of Chile, to cite only a recent example, certainly gives some credence to this theory.

Ironically, the current conservative model explaining the supposed association of capitalism and democracy relates to the Marxist as a photographic negative to a positive. It too suggests that the political "superstructure" is determined by the "relations of production." The conservative model contrasts the dispersion of power under capitalist democracy with its concentration under socialism. Political opposition requires resources. The multiplicity of capitalists implies that any dissenting voice can find some support. Under socialism, the argument goes, the controlling political faction can deny its opponents all resources and dismiss them from their employment.

This theoretical argument presupposes a monolithic state. It is something of a chicken-and-egg proposition. If the democratic legal tradition is strong, there are many sources of power in a modern state. Adding economic control functions may only increase the diversity of interests within the state and therefore alternative sources of power. It is

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notoriously harder for the government to regulate its own agencies than private firms. Socialism may easily offer as much pluralism as capitalism.

The overpowering force in all these arguments is the empirical evidence of the Soviet Union and the other Communist countries, and it is strong. But the contrary proposition, that capitalism is a positive safeguard for democracy, is hardly a reasonable inference from experience. The example of Nazi Germany shows that no amount of private enterprise prevents the rise of totalitarianism. Indeed, it is hard to see that capitalism formed a significant impediment. Nor is Nazi Germany unique; Fascist Italy, Franco's Spain, and the recurrent Latin-American dictatorships are illustrative counterexamples to the proposition that capitalism implies democracy.

Further evidence can be drawn from the increasing role of the state in guiding economic activity. The United States, the United Kindom, and Sweden, though not socialist as that term is properly used, have certainly greatly increased their intervention in the economy. Yet democracy and political and personal freedom have never been stronger in these countries. Indeed, Samuel Huntington has argued that an *excess* of democracy makes it difficult to meet the current problems of the United States.

The evidence, it seems to me, points to the view that the viability of freedom and democracy may be quite independent of the economic system. There can be no complete conviction on this score until we can observe a viable democratic socialist society. But we certainly need not fear that gradual moves toward increasing government intervention or other forms of social experimentation will lead to an irreversible slide to "serfdom."

It would be a pleasure to end this lecture with a rousing affirmation one way or the other. But as T. S. Eliot told us, that is not "how the world will end." Experiment *is* perilous, but it is not given to us to refrain from the attempt. □

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A Public Service Message from the American Income Life Insurance Company of Waco, Texas — Bernard Rapoport, chairman of the board and chief executive officer.

High-Capital Requirements

By Bernard Rapoport

Notes for a talk given at the first annual Metroplex Entrepreneurship Seminar in Dallas, Dec. 2-3, 1977, sponsored by a group of businesses, financial institutions, universities, government agencies, and Metroplex area chambers of commerce.

We are here to have a discussion about free enterprise. I hope it is a subject that will still have validity in the years to come. Doubts arise because access for individuals who want to participate in the free enterprise system is becoming increasingly difficult.

I was talking with one of the outstanding mayors of one of our larger cities a few weeks ago and he was relating the story of his father going into the cleaning and pressing business in the early thirties. It took just a few dollars to buy an iron and outfit a little room. His dad was indeed a free enterpriser. He was in business for himself. Today, as I understand it, it would take three or four hundred thousand dollars to open up a cleaning and pressing establishment. Access is difficult or well nigh impossible for most Americans.

We must, in considering the subject of free enterprise, understand that what causes a lack of faith and distrust among a populace is when a society gives lip service and commitment to an attribute or a principle when it is no longer existent or possible. You and I are advocates of free enterprise. We think it is the best system. If we don't address ourselves to the problem of access, then free enterprise will be only a pleasurable memory.

Robert Heilbroner, one of America's foremost economists, in his book "Business Civilization in Decline," is not as much an advocate as he is a reporter. As with all reporters he sees what he wants to see, and another individual viewing the same scene might have opposite conclusions. He refers to three stages of economic development, the first being Colonial America and up to the 1850's. During this period government made possible the early network of roads, canals and railroads. The whole transportation system hinged on the contribution of government.

After 1850 and through the New Deal, the vast regulatory networks manifested themselves. Commissions such as the Interstate Commerce Commission, Federal Trade Commission and the Federal Reserve System became not only widespread, but got deeper and deeper into the industries that they were regulating. The conclusion about this intrusion of government into economics was that the purpose was the regulation of markets. In other words, no one was willing for the unseen hand of competition to equalize supply and demand, which, as Adam Smith conceived it, would have made for a fair price.

Then the third phase, which began with the New Deal, was government actively regulating the economy, establishing the level of employment, the rate of growth, and also accepting the responsibility of being the distributor of welfare. It is an interesting observation that businessmen talk about free enterprise and yet when someone proposes deregulation, as in the airline industry, those who are regulated scream that they must have regulation.

Today, we have a disease, an intractable one of high unemployment and inflation. This was not contemplated under either Keynesian economics or classical economics. Theoretically, in both economic philosophies, if you had high unemployment you would have the attendant lack of consumer purchasing power and this would lead to deflation.

We have relied on classical or Keynesian economics for so long, and both of these made certain assumptions about the economic system that no longer relate to what exists today. This is obviously the reason we are having such a difficult time with inflation and unemployment. We think in terms of a self-correcting market system—that the crossing of the supply and demand curve will equate price. What has happened, of course, is that our institutions have gotten so out of hand that they are sufficiently powerful to administer prices and defy the laws of supply and demand as we had come to understand them.

(to be continued in the next issue)

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